

**The Study of Economic, Informational, and Cultural Barriers to
Community College Student Transfer Access
at Selective Institutions**

Section IV

**Practices Supporting Transfer of Low-Income
Community College Students to Selective Institutions:
Case Study Findings**

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Introduction

As we learned from the first two sections of the study, access for socio-economically disadvantaged students to highly selective four-year institutions is quite limited. Given these limits, however, low-income students who begin their academic careers at a community college are just as likely to complete their baccalaureate degrees in a timely way when compared to peers from similar socioeconomic backgrounds who begin their studies in the four-year setting. Those few community college students who transfer successfully to four-year elite settings complete their degree goals at the same rate as students who start out as freshmen at the same institutions. Section three of the study helps us to understand the cultural borderlands that exist between students from this select group of community college students who have been successful in elite settings and the selective institutions to which they transferred.

Despite the relatively low numbers of low-income students who actually transfer from community colleges to selective settings, the results of Section II indicate that some institutions seem more likely to recruit, admit, and support these students. Section IV of the study—“Practices Supporting Transfer of Low-Income Community College Students to Selective Institutions: Case Study Findings”—seeks to identify exemplary transfer access programs at some of these four-year institutions in the public and private sectors. Using data generated from interviews with administrators, staff, and faculty in 8 different institutions and the community college feeders with which they were most closely affiliated, the report describes policies and practices intended to recruit, enroll and support community college students who transfer to highly-selective settings.

Some colleges and universities have begun to address barriers that make transfer difficult and even impossible for academically prepared, low-income students. The report has six sub-

sections intended to explore the exemplary practices at highly selective institutions (and the community colleges with which they partner) that are in place to identify, recruit, orient, admit, and support community college transfer students. The first section of the report identifies the ways in which institutions were selected to participate in the study and the tools used to gather, organize, and analyze the data collected during site visits. Second, the report briefly aims to clarify the perceptions of community college students by both four- and two-year institutions as a way of providing insight into the third facet of the study, the partnerships and programs and practices which have been designed to address the perceived needs of students. Fourth, the report examines a series of critical features which were found to support the ongoing identification, recruitment, orientation, and support of community college transfer students: financial aid, dedicated resources, transfer champions, the role of faculty, and the policy environment. Barriers to such support are described briefly in the fifth section which is followed by a final set of recommendations for institutions intending to become more amenable to supporting transfer of community college students to selective settings.

Methodology

Case Studies

The case study was made up of two parts: (1) a document analysis of promising practices to support low-income, academically qualified transfers from community colleges to highly selective four-year institutions, and (2) field research, involving site visits to learn about “best-practices partnerships” between highly selective four-year institutions and community colleges.

1) *Document analysis of current promising practices among transfer access*

programs between community colleges and selective colleges and universities.

Through an analysis of academic literature, news reports, national reports, and institutional web sites, this aspect of the study identified exemplary practices at selective four-year institutions that demonstrate how to recruit, admit, retain, and graduate high-achieving, low-income community college transfer students.

2) *Case studies of 8 “best practice” partnerships between selective four-year*

institutions (representing a range of institutional characteristics, such as public/private, liberal arts/research universities and geographic location and

community colleges). Researchers conducted interviews with faculty and administrators about institutional culture and recruitment, admission, and retention practices designed to facilitate transfer of low-income community college students.

Selection of four-year highly selective institutions for the case study was based on the multivariate regression analysis of data from the Annual Survey of Colleges of the College Board, described in Section II, which identified four-year institutions whose *overall* (two- and four-year transfers combined) transfer rate was higher than those of institutions with similar

characteristics. The analysis controlled for factors such as geographic location or public control that could account for higher transfer enrollments. The 8 case study institutions were characterized as “transfer amenable” and likely to have exemplary practices. Because the study was not evaluative but instead relied on the perspectives of those interviewed regarding the effectiveness of the practices, researchers triangulated information obtained from literature reviews and the theoretical constructs which framed the study, as well as data collected from multiple sites to endorse certain practices as exemplary.

Researchers

Under the direction of Dr. Glenn Gabbard, Associate Director of the New England Resource Center for Higher Education (NERCHE) at the University of Massachusetts Boston (UMB), the researchers for case study research were organized into two teams, one from UMB and the other from the University of Southern California (USC). The UMB team consisted of Dr. Jay Dee, Dr. Alicia C. Dowd, Dr. Dwight E. Giles, Jr., and Dr. Tara Parker, faculty members in the Higher Education Doctoral Program; and Dr. Glenn Gabbard, Sharon Singleton, and Thara Fuller of NERCHE. The USC team members included: Dr. Estela Mara Bensimon, Professor and Director of USC’s Center for Urban Education, Dr. Elsa Macias, a senior research associate in USC’s Tomás Rivera Policy Institute, David Fabienke, Lindsey Malcom, Amalia Márquez, and Daniel K. Park, graduate students at USC.

Case Study Research

The case study research was designed to answer the question: What successful models exist at selective four-year institutions that demonstrate how to recruit, admit, retain, and graduate high-achieving, low-income community college transfer students? Specifically, researchers sought to understand (a) the policies and practices that characterize the recruitment, admission, and support of low-income community college transfer students; (b) the factors affecting the successful transfer of these students; and (c) the impediments to expanding the opportunities for low-income community college students to attend four-year selective institutions. The beliefs and attitudes of faculty and administrators and the institutional cultures of highly selective institutions and of community colleges were among the factors explored.

Initial Perspectives

Interpretation of study findings was informed by perceived barriers to transfer—informational and cultural—outlined in the RFP issued by the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation, Lumina Foundation for Education, and Nellie Mae Education Foundation. Low-income community college students frequently lack access to information about options to transfer to highly selective institutions, including admissions and, perhaps most importantly, financial aid. Because of the complexity of financial aid packaging, students who may be able to afford college may not realize their eligibility for grants and loans (Kane, 1999). Admissions, financial aid, and transfer counselors must play the role of family members in providing information to community college students to help them

decipher the complex world of selective college application, admissions, and financial aid.

High achieving students from low-income backgrounds often have difficulty mastering the culture of four-year institutions resulting in even lower levels of self confidence (Wolf-Wendel, et al., 2004). Even with extensive preparation prior to matriculation at a selective school, many transfers struggle academically during their first semester while trying to adapt to the new setting (Harbin, 1997).

College students navigate the institutional culture of higher education with the help of “trusted agents” (Stanton Salazar, 1997). These are faculty members, administrators, and counselors who help students to feel they belong at a particular institution and can successfully achieve their goals there. Through trusted agents, students accumulate *funds of knowledge*, which are networks, resources, and opportunities for upward mobility. To obtain these funds students must develop supportive relationships with institutional agents. For students who are not part of the dominant cultural group, developing these relationships may require initial effort as a “cultural worker” to understand, decode, and gain trust in the culture of higher education (K. P. González, 2001; K. P. González, Stone, & Jovel, 2003).

By recognizing cultural barriers, the role of trusted agents, and the mechanisms by which students acquire funds of knowledge, administrators can design access programs to lower these barriers and facilitate the acquisition of cultural knowledge among students whose families cannot guide them through a foreign milieu.

This discussion framed our understanding of the transfer access problem. Solutions to this problem lie most potently in efforts to achieve greater transparency in selective college admissions and financial aid packaging; to make networks of

information known, accessible, and inclusive; and to bring attention to attitudes and behaviors among community college and selective college faculty and administrators that undermine the aspirations of low-income students.

Site Selection

We employed a mixed methods strategy of data analysis and document review in order to select the 8 best-practice sites as well as two alternates (See Table 1: *Steps in Determining Sites for Case Study Research*). Initial selection of 180 highly selective institutions was based on categorizations as “highly competitive” and “most competitive institutions in the 2004 and 2005 Barron’s Profiles of American Colleges. As rankings for individual institutions shift over time, a number of institutions consistently ranked as most or highly competitive in both 2004 *and* 2005 were treated as having higher prestige. This restriction reduced the size of the sample from 180 to 122. In addition, using College Board data, institutions were categorized according to the extent to which their actual observed transfer rate (for two-year and four-year students combined) exceeded that predicted by a statistical model based on their institutional enrollment characteristics and other predictive factors in the model. The purpose of this analysis was to identify those “transfer amenable” colleges falling relatively far above transfer enrollment expectations in order to broaden consideration of the factors that matter in order to identify institutions with “exemplary” transfer access practices. In order to assure maximum variation sampling (based on urbanization, regional diversity, and other factors) for the purposes of the study, 60 institutions were selected from the group of 122.

To determine whether the sites had policies and practices to encourage and support community college transfer, we conducted web site reviews of the 60 institutions

from which Institutional Profiles were created to delineate the specific features of potential sites that indicate a commitment to supporting transfer students from two-year colleges, such as formal transfer structures, elaborated policies and related practices, institution-level commitment, public awareness through use of media, elaborated relationships with two-year institutions and specialized programs within disciplines.

Table 1. Steps in Determining Sites for Case Study Research

Step	Data Source	Outcome
1. Identify the “universe” of selective four-year institutions.	Barron’s Profiles of American Colleges 2004 and 2005	180 institutions categorized as highly or most competitive in the 2004 or 2005 Barron’s guide. (For further information, see Section II.)
2. Observe number and percentage of transfers from two-year sector.	College Board Annual Survey of Colleges, Fall 2002*	Focus best practices research and sampling decisions on those institutions with at least four students from two-year sector.
3. Estimate gap between expected and observed transfer rates (from two- and four-year sector).	College Board Annual Survey of Colleges, Fall 2002	Institutions ranked as exceeding or falling below predicted transfer rates (see Section II), controlling for attrition rate, % first-year students in campus housing, control (public/private), and other factors using multiple regression analysis.
4. Observe number of Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) scholarships offered by institution to community college students.	Phi Theta Kappa web site	PTK scholarships largely awarded in Eastern states. The number of PTK scholarships informs best practices research and site selection, primarily in Eastern states, where such scholarships are typically awarded.
5. Information in Steps 1-5 displayed by region, urbanization, and other factors for maximum variation sampling.	All of above, plus initial analysis of news reports of transfer access programs	Priority assigned to 60 institutions for best practices research and for consideration for site selection within regions.

* Source of Data: the Annual Survey of Colleges of the College Board and Data Base, 2002-03. Copyright 2002 College Entrance Examination Board. All rights reserved.

Step	Data Source	Outcome
6. Interview national experts who are knowledgeable about transfer issues.	A list of respondents was compiled from personal contacts of project principals, literature, foundations, and national associations.	Informed our literature review, strengthened the arguments for inclusion and exclusion of specific institutions as potential sites, and deepened our understanding of the issues surrounding community college transfer.
7. Conduct literature reviews.	National reports issued by associations and foundations, articles in the press, databases, such as Phi Theta Kappa and ERIC	Added to the body of evidence to support sample selection of institutions to serve as best practice sites.
8. Conduct web site reviews.	Web sites of the 60 colleges and universities identified by the process outlined in Steps 1-5	Added to the information on whether the sites had policies and practices to encourage and support community college transfer.
9. Develop institutional profiles.	All of the above	Delineated the specific features of potential sites that indicate a commitment to supporting transfer students from two-year colleges, such as formal transfer structures, elaborated policies and related practices, institution-level commitment, public awareness through use of media, elaborated relationships with two-year institutions, specialized programs within disciplines.
10. Analyze profiles.	Institutional profiles	Selected the most promising sites for consideration and employed a worksheet that categorized the potential sites by type of institution, whether it is affiliated with a state system, is Hispanic-serving, and is low-income serving in order to ensure a variation in the sample.
11. Select 8 best practice sites and two alternates	Table of 14 potential site visit candidates	Identified 8 institutions that represent exemplary cases for field research along with two alternate sites
12. Identify community college partners	Community College partners were identified by liaisons at the four-year sites.	

Each participating institution received a \$500 honorarium to compensate for copying, mailing, phone costs, staff time in scheduling and in interviews, and catering for days of site visits for offices filling out the forms or being interviewed. Participant recruitment strategies are explained in Table 2.

Table 2. Participant recruitment strategies

CONTACT	DOCUMENTS SENT
<i>Presidents</i> of four-year selective colleges and universities that have been identified as best practice sites.	Letter from lead site researchers describing the research, introducing the teams, requesting permission to conduct a site visit and soliciting the name of a liaison to work with the lead researcher for each visit.
<i>Designated institutional liaison</i>	Email contact with the designated liaison explaining the study and instruments and requesting a phone interview to discuss appropriate respondents and scheduling of interviews.
<i>Potential Interview Participants</i>	Email explaining the purpose of the study, and attaching an IRB consent form (articulating appropriate human subjects protections) for participants to review, sign, and return to researchers at the time of the visit and a copy of the Transfer Capacity Self Assessment Inventory with instructions for them to prepare those sections that pertained to their area of responsibility.

Participants

Because the study emphasized recruiting, enrolling and supporting low-income community college students at highly selective four-year settings, researchers spent two days at the four-year institution and one to two days at the community college partner institution. At each site researchers conducted interviews, lasting approximately one hour, with who had been

identified as key informants based on their functional, decision-making, leadership, and academic roles. Case study informants were identified from the following groups:

- Top-level administrators including presidents, chief academic officers, and deans of admissions and financial aid;
- Direct service administrators, including directors of transfer counseling; and
- Faculty at the two-year and four-year institutions (at the four-year institutions, especially those who serve on admissions committees, and at the two-year institutions, especially those who teach in honors programs).

Site researchers visited 8 institutional partnerships from October 2005 to January 2006. A site liaison at the four-year institution identified a community college partner which was most likely to yield data about exemplary transfer practices. Researchers interviewed 197 individuals among the 16 four- and two-year institutions. At the four public universities selected for the study, 75 individuals were interviewed. The public university interviews included 8 senior administrators charged with institutional oversight and leadership; 20 administrators, faculty, and staff from the academic area; and 48 administrators, staff, and directors of specialized programs for transfer students. At the four liberal arts colleges which were visited, 9 senior administrators were included; 13 individuals from the academic wing (12 of whom were faculty serving a variety of administrative functions); and 26 administrators, staff, and special program directors. At the community colleges, 74 individuals were interviewed, including 13 senior administrators; 23 academic administrators and faculty; and 36 administrators, staff, and directors of special programs. (See Table 3.)

Table 3: Site Visit Respondents

Respondents: Public Universities. N=4		
Senior Administrators:	President	1
	Chief Academic Officer	1
	Chief Student Affairs Officer	1
	Other	4
Academic Affairs:	Administrator	4
	Faculty	11
	Staff	5
Student Affairs:	Administrator	19
	Special Program Director	13
	Staff	16
Total:		75
Respondents: Liberal Arts College. N=4		
Senior Administrators:	President	2
	Chief Academic Officer	2
	Chief Student Affairs Officer	4
	Other	1
Academic Affairs:	Administrator/Faculty	5
	Faculty	7
	Staff	1
Student Affairs:	Administrator	15
	Special Program Director/Faculty	4
	Staff	7
Total:		48
Respondents: Community Colleges. N=8		
Senior Administrators:	President	4
	Chief Academic Officer	3
	Chief Student Affairs Officer	5
	Other	1
Academic Affairs:	Administrator	10
	Faculty	8
	Department Chair/Faculty	2
	Honors Program Director/Faculty	3
Student Affairs:	Administrator	15
	Special Program Director	8
	Staff	13
Total:		72

Interviews

Researchers collected data in personal interviews with respondents using an interview protocol and a Transfer Capacity Self-Assessment Inventory (SAI). The interview protocol included questions in six categories, which were developed to examine informational and cultural barriers to transfer access:

1. **Personal experience working directly with community college transfer students.**

These questions elicited descriptions of how faculty, staff, and administrators helped students overcome informational and cultural barriers to transfer. The focus here was on the personal relationships that faculty, staff, and administrators have with community college transfer students. We sought to determine how faculty, staff, and administrators help students accumulate “funds of knowledge” that enable them to navigate complex institutional systems associated with transfer.

2. **Programs, practices, and policies that enhance or impede transfer.** Institutional efforts to promote transfer are not simply the sum of individual actions; instead, they reflect programs, practices, and policies that guide organizational behavior. In this area, we obtained information about the development and implementation of financial aid policies, recruitment practices, orientation programs, and approaches to advising and counseling transfer students. We sought to determine whether these policies, practices, and programs addressed informational and cultural barriers that transfer students often encounter.

3. **Knowledge and experiences working with community college partners.** These questions sought to determine whether inter-organizational networks between community colleges and selective four-year institutions facilitated the development of a common

“fund of knowledge” that faculty and administrators at both institutions could draw upon to assist transfer students. In this area, we obtained information about inter-institutional consortia, professional associations, articulation agreements, and informal relationships among faculty and staff at both partnering institutions.

4. **Faculty roles in transfer issues.** Given their prominent roles on admissions committees in four-year institutions, and their involvement in honors programs and other specialized curricula at community colleges, faculty members have significant capacity to promote transfer access. Therefore, it is important to understand faculty beliefs about and expectations for community college transfer students. These beliefs and expectations will affect their willingness and capacity to facilitate transfer student success.
5. **Administrative perspectives.** We sought to determine whether enrollment plans or other strategic initiatives addressed the financial, informational, and cultural barriers that transfer students often encounter, and if so, whether the effectiveness of those efforts had been assessed. These questions also enabled us to determine the extent to which top-level administrators are committed to increasing efforts to recruit more low-income community college transfer students.
6. **Knowledge of students and campus culture.** Such knowledge is critical if faculty, staff, and administrators seek to make the campus culture more inviting for transfer students. We sought to determine if faculty, staff, and administrators viewed the campus culture as something that transfer students needed to adjust to, or whether there were efforts to change the campus culture to make it more receptive to transfer students.

Transfer Capacity Self Assessment Inventory (SAI)

The Transfer Capacity Self-Assessment Inventory (SAI) was developed as an audit instrument to assist institutions in documenting practices and impediments to the transfer of low-income community college students to selective institutions. Given differences by institutional type, we created two versions of the SAI; one for community colleges and one for selective four-year institutions (see Appendix B). The sections in both versions of the SAI, however, were similar in their focus on financial, informational, and cultural barriers to transfer access, as well as on programs, practices, and policies to address those barriers.

Development of the SAI was guided by the study's conceptual framework and by the perspectives of practitioners in community colleges and four-year selective institutions who reviewed the items prior to the field work. The assessment foci for each SAI section are described below:

- **Section 1: Student Services.** Assesses transfer capacity by eliciting data on the frequency with which the institution provides various recruitment, admissions, counseling, and orientation services.
- **Section 2: Financial Aid.** Assesses the equity of financial aid policies by eliciting comparisons of award amounts between transfer students and first-year students with comparable need.
- **Section 3: Personnel.** Assesses transfer capacity by gathering data on the number of staff and administrators who have responsibilities associated with community college transfer.
- **Section 4: Publicity and Public Statements.** Assesses institutional commitment to transfer by determining the extent to which publications and other media feature community college transfer students.

- **Section 5: Institutional Transfer Policies and Practices.** Assesses whether the institution engages in policies and practices that enhance or impede community college transfer access.
- **Section 6: Partnerships and Collaboration.** Assesses whether inter-organizational relationships promote transfer access, and whether professional and/or informal relationships among faculty and staff from the two-year and four-year institutions promote transfer.
- **Section 7: Barriers to Transfer Access.** Enables multiple respondents to assess whether a range of practices (recruitment, admissions, financial aid, academic standards, physical resources, institutional goals, institutional reputation) serves as barriers to transfer access.
- **Section 8: Institutional Mission.** Enables multiple respondents to assess the extent to which various dimensions of the institution's mission promote transfer access.

Prior to the fieldwork, the institutional liaison identified faculty, staff, and administrators who had the most knowledge of programs, practices, and policies related to transfer. With the liaison's assistance, we matched these individuals to one or more of the first six sections of the SAI. We sought to match individuals with the section(s) that pertained most directly to their areas of responsibility related to transfer. Each identified SAI respondent also completed sections 7 and 8.

In many instances, respondents completed their respective SAI sections prior to the in-person interview. However, in some cases, respondents completed the SAI sections during the interview. In all cases, we asked respondents to comment on the SAI as an assessment tool and as a vehicle for stimulating changes in institutional programs, practices, and policies.

Respondents provided useful information for clarifying certain items and for administering the SAI in ways that maximize its potential for promoting institutional change.

Overview of data analysis

As recommended by qualitative research methodologists (Creswell, 2003; Patton, 1990; Polkinghorne & Gribbons, 1998), researchers analyzed the data recursively, drawing on themes inherent in the construction of the interview protocol and moving towards inductively derived themes from the data. By revealing the meaning attached to transfer activities and access issues by those interviewed, these themes informed recommendations to promote the development of transfer access capacity at two- and four-year colleges. Themes were located in institutional contexts as framed by our case study sampling. One of the few studies addressing the nature of successful transfer of community college students to selective institutions indicates that such studies must focus on the unique institutional features of both the sending and receiving colleges (Morphew, et al., 2001).

Limitations

Using in-depth case study interviews and document analysis, this study focuses on policies and practices which characterize the recruitment, admission, orientation, and ongoing academic support for community college transfer students. In-depth interviews provide only the attitudes, beliefs, or opinions of the participants at a particular time. The quality of the data is contingent on a shared understanding by both participant and interviewer of critical concepts and related language used during the interview.

Institutional Descriptions

Preliminary site selections were based in part on a consideration of data and characteristics associated with each selective institution, including: institution size (based on total undergraduate enrollment); total number of enrolled transfer students; percentage of enrolled transfers who transferred from two-year institutions; type of residential setting (i.e., urban or suburban) in which the institution was located; and the institution’s funding structure (i.e., public or private). Data from the 8 sites were then compared in order to establish relative groupings within specific categories (see Table 4). Thus, an institution’s size was considered “large” if its total undergraduate enrollment exceeded 20,000 students; “medium” if enrollment fell between 12,000 and 15,000; and “low” for enrollments less than 3,000. The same grouping was assigned to the total number of transfer students enrolled at each institution, with the “large” designation corresponding to numbers between 1,600 and 2,500 students; “medium,” 80 to 350; and “low,” less than 75. Similarly, for each selective institution, if the percentage of transfer students from two-year institutions exceeded 75%, that percentage was considered “high”; 50-60%, “mid”; and less than 25%, “low.”

Table 4: Features Defining Sub-Categories of Selected Sites

	Total Undergraduate Enrollment	Total Number of Enrolled Transfer Students	Percentage of Transfer Students from Two-Year Colleges
LOW	<3000	<75	<25%
MEDIUM	12,000-15,000	80-350	50%-60%
HIGH	>20,000	1,600-2,500	>75%

Four public universities were included in the study. Clawson University was paired with its nearby feeder institution, Belasco Community College. Greenmeade University was

partnered with Sable City College while Pendleton University was linked to Twin Peaks Community College. Ardweather University and Entwhistle Community College comprise the fourth grouping. Four liberal arts institutions and their respective community college partners included: Verano University and Concord Community College; Merryfield College and Calisto Community College; Tewksbury College and Mountain Grove Community College; and Crestfield College and Tuscan Community College.[†]

[†] Institutional names were changed for this study.

Table 5: Preliminary Site Selection with Identifying Features

Community College Transfer Initiative: Preliminary Site Selection with Identifying Features												
Institution *	% Transfers, 2-year			Total # Transfers			Undergrad Enrollment			Urban / Suburban	Public / Private	Community College Partner *
	Low	Mid	High	Small	Medium	Large	Small	Medium	Large			
Pendleton University			•			•			•	U	Public	Twin Peaks Community College
Greenmeade University			•			•			•	U	Public	Sable City College
Clawson University			•			•			•	U	Public	Belasco Community College
Crestfield College		•		•			•			S	Private	Tuscany Community College
Verano University		•			•		•			S	Private	Concord Community College
Ardweather University	•				•			•		S	Public	Entwhistle Community College
Merryfield College	•			•			•			S	Private	Calisto Community College
Tewksbury College	•			•			•			S	Private	Mountain Grove Community College

* Institution names have been changed for this study.

Students

Each of the 8 partnership sites which were included in this study acknowledge, to varying extents, the distinctive educational profile of low-income community college students. While the current report focuses on the range of programs and practices which institutions have developed to recruit, admit, orient, and provide ongoing support to these students, it is important to consider the ways in which this student population was defined by individuals whom we interviewed; how perceptions of these students by college faculty and staff compared to those of native students or transfer students from other economic backgrounds; and the needs of this population which informed program development at the various sites.

Low Income Community College Transfer Students

I spent 24 years driving an 18-wheeler and at one point I thought I should learn to turn on a computer, because everything was becoming computerized. And I said, “Well, maybe I’ll go to the community college and I’ll take a computer course to learn something about these things.” I really had a great time in the class. And I thought, well, maybe I’ll take another class. I didn’t know what else to take, so I took a writing class and I loved it. And then I took a critical thinking class that just lit my brain on fire. Things started happening in my head. I really, really like learning, and I’m so grateful for the community college for – for being there. All I had to do was sign up and take an affordable class. And by doing that, I opened myself to a whole world of experience that I might have missed. Because I went to [X College], my brain just went wild. I just love it. There were all kinds of opportunities there that I was able to take advantage of... like going to Oxford University in England for a summer and studying international law. (Pak, et al., 2006)

Very little has been written about high achieving low-income students who transfer to highly selective institutions, though, as this research shows, a consistent, though small, number of these students make the transition from community college settings to the nation’s elite colleges and universities. As reported in Section II of this report, in 2002, the number of low-income community college transfer students enrolled at elite institutions could be as low as

1,000, with the majority of those students likely attending public universities. In addition, of *all* two-year transfer students enrolled at elite institutions, only three percent attended small liberal arts colleges. Case study findings supported this assertion, with flagship public institutions operating under state mandated articulation agreements enrolling the highest numbers of low-income community college transfer students and liberal arts colleges enrolling the lowest numbers. In this case study, researchers relied on the perceptions of respondents from the two- and four-year setting to determine which students were low-income.

The educational experience of low-income students tends to take place in resource-poor public schools systems from which many students graduate to enter positions generating minimal earnings. A few with exceptional academic ability will catch the attention of a teacher, counselor or an influential adult from the community who, through personal attention, use of connections, or mentoring, will launch them toward a promising future by way of a privileged higher education. Of those whose potential goes unnoticed, some will enter local community colleges, sometimes in professional or technical training programs. Others, unaware of the culture of higher education, including financial aid possibilities, will enroll in public four-year colleges that are in close proximity to their families and to the jobs that will make it possible for them to afford to attend. They may choose majors that are expedient rather than ones that prepare them for graduate school (Borrego, 2004). Still others, lost in overcrowded high school classes and overlooked by guidance counselors, will soon acquire the adulthood responsibilities of work and family, never considering higher education as a viable choice until later in life, when they may turn to community colleges.

Once in the community college setting, many high-ability students will commit themselves to further academic work, though the opportunities for getting on track for transfer to

a selective college or university are somewhat random. In some cases, a faculty or staff member with an eye for academic talent may take a role in guiding promising students to the kinds of supports they will need to choose the courses, make the grades, and successfully complete the admissions process to gain entrance to a highly-selective institution. A peer may open up the world of transfer by recounting his or her personal experience with a helpful faculty member or a pre-transfer program. Or, based on the results of a placement exam, they may be recommended for an honors program, or preparatory program that introduces them to the four-year campus and develops their skills and habits that will position them to succeed there.

Having matriculated to a highly selective four-year institution, they find that to meet the standards of the college they need to have a clear sense of their academic path, to be able to conduct independent analysis, to read critically and write intensively, and to perform well in science and math. They find that the pace and volume of work has increased dramatically. They must also be assertive and self-starters, who manage time well, know the kinds of questions to ask, where to find the correct answers, and which rules are important and which can be negotiated. They may find that their cultural capital, their “social circles, experiences, and connections.... have little utility outside of their own circles” (Borrego, 2004).

If they have transferred to a setting where faculty and staff understand and are responsive to their needs and experiences, they will likely proceed successfully through the next two years. In an unsupportive environment, their future at the institution is less clear.

Low-income community college students, while academically able, often distrust their own abilities. They are hungry for the educational experience that an elite institution can offer, but they find it hard to picture themselves in that setting. A study respondent explained that “there is a perception among low-income students...that they can’t make it at an [elite

institution]. I think it happens a lot for many community college students—a sense that they don't belong at [an elite institution]. They feel like it's a whole different language, that all the people there have a lot more [resources] than they do, and are able to focus only on their work.” In fact, study respondents reported that, unlike their wealthier counterparts, most low-income community college students do not have the array of sports, clubs, or co-curricular experiences that are valued in the upper reaches of the academy. Instead they have worked low-level jobs and have gained a practical experience of the world that builds the type of character that may go unrecognized by the institutional culture in which they now reside, often on the margins. Some struggle with learning disabilities that were not identified in their early years. Given the range of circumstances and difficulties that confront low-income students, the challenges of a competitive, fast-paced environment may be overwhelming. They may be standout students while juggling complicated lives and responsibilities in the community college setting only to find that the very different, sometimes aggressively competitive world of the highly selective institutions is not as conducive to these complexities. A financial aid staff member at a large university described the experience of a low-income transfer student who recently took a leave of absence.

She was a superstar at [the community college], and she was actually featured in a [national newspaper] for being one of the top community college students. While she was going to [the community college], she was able to take tons of classes, get straight A's, and work a large number of hours to make her car payments so that she could travel two hours to visit her mother who was dying of cancer. She came here and tried to do the same thing that she did at [the community college], and she just started racking up incompletes. She wasn't able to make up her incompletes. Her mother passed away, and now she has gone on leave. She just couldn't keep going that way. And now her debts are going into repayment, so that means she has to go back to working, making it less likely that she will return. (Pak, et al., 2006)

This aggregate portrait of high achieving low-income students may seem discouraging; however, the data from this study bolsters the argument that these students belong in these settings where, given the necessary supports, they will thrive.

How are they perceived?

Case study findings showed that the perceptions of community college students who transfer to highly selective institutions vary, depending on the type of institutions and even the type of transfer student. In large research institutions that typically accept traditional-age transfers, perceptions of these students were mixed. Favorable perceptions were prevalent within individual colleges with strong connections to the university's transfer mission. Faculty, administrators and staff in these colleges tended to become involved with these students beyond the classroom, gaining a deeper understanding of the circumstances that shaped them, as well as their aspirations, sense of self, needs and potential. Faculty have seen the evidence that community college transfer students performed just as well as their native counterparts. Faculty described low-income community college transfer students, many of whom were slightly older than the native students, as more mature and more interesting than native students, natural leaders, academically and socially "street smart," and more diverse—culturally, racially, and ethnically. Similar kinds of praise were reserved for nontraditional-age women students enrolled in special programs. According to faculty and administrators who worked with this population, these students often outpaced the native students. They win a disproportionate number of awards and go on to prestigious careers, many of them in the academy. Faculty and staff described these students as "gutsy" and "focused" and they welcomed their perspectives and insights in the classroom. Some respondents felt the life experience that these students brought to the classroom

had a positive impact on native students, whose worldview is typically informed by far different experiences.

In spite of anecdotal data that high-achieving low-income community college transfers perform as well, and in some cases, better than native students, these transfer students face barriers that no amount of academic and cultural preparation can dissipate. Study respondents referred to an attitude of elitism at highly selective institutions that easily distorted perceptions of community college transfer students in general. An administrator in a college at a large public university commented “I’m not sure the rest of the campus has the same commitment [to community college transfer students]. There is an academic snobbery here. It’s not new. Community college students are seen as ‘a certain kind of student.’”

Community college transfer students, some argued, were stigmatized as “something less than” the typical native student. In addition, faculty voiced preferences for native students or those who had transferred from comparable four-year institutions and understood the culture. They tended to place responsibility for poor academic preparation on the shoulders of community colleges, rather than on students’ innate ability. They named such factors as lack of resources and diffuse missions that may make it difficult for community colleges to focus on transfer. A common perception was that advising and teaching at community colleges were of variable quality and reliability, especially in the sciences, leaving community college transfer students unprepared to master the level of work expected at a highly competitive institution. Some explained that community colleges did not offer courses that transfer students would need in order to enter certain majors at the four-year setting. These views often translated into low expectations for community college transfer students. Some native students also expressed perceptions that community college students were poorly prepared.

Attitudes of some faculty and staff toward community college transfer students

sometimes reflected perceptions of the cultures from which students come, revealing a belief that family expectations preclude higher education.

What do they need?

High-achieving low-income community college transfer students whose educational foundations were laid in poorly resourced K-12 systems often do not have the knowledge and skills necessary to make the transition to any four-year institution, not to mention the high stakes environment of highly selective colleges and universities. First and foremost, they need to know that transfer to a highly selective four-year institution is a possibility that they can realistically pursue. Often this message is conveyed at the community college level by a trusted faculty member or administrator who recognizes promise in a student, as illustrated in the following quotation by a community college transfer student at highly selective four-year college:

I became a tutor because the director of tutoring suggested it. He also said “You should go on for your four-year degree. Maybe you should look into (Y College).” If [he] had not ever mentioned it to me, I wouldn’t have ever known, because it’s not something [that is publicized] at the transfer office or advertised anywhere on the [Z Community College] campus... I went over to the tutoring center and said “I want to be a tutor.” And [the staff member] said there were not any spots. But then [the director of the tutoring center] said to put me into tutor training anyway. And that’s how it all started. I took tutor training, and I became a master tutor within a year. I took independent course studies with him. I was in the honors program. And that year I scholastically skyrocketed, and by January, it was pretty clear that...I [needed] to go onto a four-year school. [The director of the tutoring center] pushed me, and fostered me, and took me under his wing, and said, “You can do this. You can, you can...” He’s very, very mentoring to the tutors and the students that come to the center. He even mentors those who aren’t tutors if they ask. He’s so good with the students... He’s sneaky. He was taking another tutor up to an interview at [Y College]. He said, “I’d like you to come with us. Can you at least come with us and see what the college is about?... Not that I’m sales pressuring you or anything.” So I did, I had a wonderful time. He goes beyond encouraging. He’ll take you right up there for the interview if you want. He edited my essay [for the application] for me. And I edit a lot of his stuff now. He went *beyond* beyond. I went to a conference with him on leadership and activism. He’d asked top

students to go with him to certain conferences that [they] could benefit from. And he exposed us to other levels of education and educational opportunities that we wouldn't necessarily already have. (Pak, et al., 2006)

Individuals such as the tutoring center director referenced in this quote can dramatically change the course of a student's life. Beyond personal encouragement and guidance from faculty and administrators, however, low-income community college students often need other kinds of information and supports to prepare them for transfer to highly selective institutions. They need:

1. to know the academic skills that are essential at the four-year setting, and to have some level of empirical experience with the academic cultural environment of the world they hope to enter.
2. to be able to investigate financial aid opportunities and understand how specific elements of the application process are weighted.
3. to develop relationships with students from similar backgrounds who have successfully negotiated the process and made the transition to an elite institution.

Very often high achieving community college transfer students will need practical advice on managing an educational environment that is very different from the one they experienced at their community college. One respondent from a large four-year university noted that it is time management, rather than lack of academic preparation, that generates the most difficulties for transfer students:

Students say this all the time. It is not so much that it is much harder [at the university], but it is the volume that is much greater [than the workload at the community college]. So time management is extremely important here, and so is being more assertive than you were at your community college. You need to go to those office hours. You need to see your faculty. Let faculty know if you have difficulties.

Further, working adults will benefit from flexible course schedules that permit them to attend class in the evenings or on weekends. Those whose full financial need has not been met may have to pursue part-time enrollment options so that they can continue to work.

Among the institutions that meet these needs well are public universities that are closely aligned with their missions to enroll students who represent all strata of the state's population. Those institutions that are most successful have integrated high-achieving low-income community college transfer students across constituent colleges. Other institutions rely on specific colleges to recruit, enroll and support these students.

While most community college transfer students are traditional-age, access for nontraditional women students is a priority for some small liberal arts colleges with deeply rooted social justice missions. These colleges employ a cohort model with large enough numbers of students enrolled each year to facilitate identity formation and networks of support. These non-traditional age students have a unique set of needs that may sometimes conflict with those of traditional-age students. Nontraditional-age women often require housing that will accommodate children, childcare options, and health centers that are sensitive to their issues, which can include high blood pressure and chronic diseases. In addition, on these campuses, small class sizes, low faculty-to-student ratios, as well as personalized, supportive structures for these students seemed to maximize their potential to succeed.

Cohort models may be beneficial for students who are easily distinguished from typical students on campus by virtue of their age. However, respondents from other campuses that employ special programs for traditional-age low-income students reported tensions between attending to the students' unique needs and finding ways for them to assimilate into the student

body. Respondents expressed concern about creating a two-track system which could marginalize these students, though a ready solution was not available.

As evidenced by the multiple programs researchers uncovered at the 8 sites, many high achieving low-income community college students benefit from an array of supports. The subsections of this report that follow will identify promising practice models and analyze specific components that help orient these students to the notion of attending highly selective institutions, instruct them in the elements of admissions, prepare them for the rigors of the academic environment and the cultural rules of the institution, and encourage their success.

Partnerships

A central focus of this study was on partnerships between two- and four-year institutions that were identified as especially effective in recruiting, enrolling and supporting high achieving low-income community college students. In a study of key indicators that determine transfer student success—most specifically the psycho-social adjustments that community college students make in their transition to university, Lanaan (1996) cites the importance of strong partnerships between community college and university administrators so that students can feel similarly supported by their community college and university campuses. Many study respondents referred to the importance of strong partnerships in easing community college transfer, with one noting “Through our collaborative agreements, we know the faculty and the transfer counselors. They know us...and they are sending us their best. At other community colleges, there is not the same level of trust.” For students, continuity of relationships and open communication are likely to result in tangible benefits, such as the ability to navigate the system with the help of informed guidance.

Morphew et al. (2001) explored the partnership between Smith College and two public community colleges, Miami-Dade Community College and Santa Monica Community College with the aim of identifying the factors that have contributed to the steady success of the transfer programs. Among the factors relative to partnerships are:

- *high level of involvement* by key staff and faculty at the partner institutions.
- *a formal transfer agreement* in writing which was developed collaboratively and provides clarity and efficiency.

Partnerships between community colleges and highly selective institutions in this case study were often sustained by ongoing involvement of key individuals from multiple functional

areas—from senior administrators to transfer center staff—on such things as steering committees consisting of faculty and staff from each institution; opportunities, such as jointly sponsored conferences, for faculty and staff to address issues of mutual concern; and regular communication between top administrators.

Partnerships were described as successful by respondents based on the *quality* of the relationships, with healthy partnerships characterized by professional respect and mutuality, and trust in the other’s reliability. A director of undergraduate admissions at one university noted the importance of two-way communication between the university and the partnering community college.

So many times we are asking our counterparts at [community colleges] to help us better understand how to approach community college students—how to recruit them, how to work with them. It is basically two-way. We are often giving them advice on individual students that they are counseling and, in return, we are often asking how best to work with their students.

High quality interactions and relationships are difficult to formally mandate or detail in written agreements. They tend to evolve through the dedication of the individuals. However, certain formal structures foster and reinforce relationship building, for example, a written agreement and formal positions with designated liaison responsibilities between the two institutions. Formal positions insure that when particular individuals move on, the relationship does not end. High levels of faculty involvement, in particular, were a feature of partnerships between smaller liberal arts colleges and community colleges within the context of specific programmatic partnerships. At large universities, faculty participation was less consistent and varied across institutions. Faculty in specific colleges with strong transfer missions within one large university had close working relationships with staff and faculty at the partner community college; yet this commitment was not demonstrated institution-wide. Similarly, at another

university, faculty preferences for first-year students and transfer students from comparable institutions were identified by study participants as critical barriers to establishing a university-wide commitment to community college transfer. At this institution, administrators tended to spearhead efforts to admit and support community college transfers, though changing perceptions and practices associated with community college transfer is part of the university's long-term enrollment strategy.

State mandated articulation agreements were perceived as successful when clear, easily accessible information about up-to-date course requirements and changes was available to constituents, such as students, transfer counselors, and advisors. In some cases, however, managing complex agreements was cumbersome, especially when informational changes were especially difficult to track, making it necessary to establish personal relationships and multiple points of contact between the two institutions. For example, at a large public institution where the strength of the articulation agreement was perceived to have eroded, respondents from the community college partner mentioned the importance of building strong relationships at the college level. The Director of Advising at the community college sits on the statewide Articulation Committee and has been actively engaged in resolving issues between the community college and the various colleges at the partnering university. The director noted that building and sustaining personal relationships with staff and faculty at the university is critical, especially because of the highly decentralized nature of the campus.

Partnerships can only form if there is a mutual interest in and value placed on providing access to low-income community college students who have the ability to perform well in highly selective settings. When asked about barriers that prohibit the development of partnerships, a respondent at one community college identified reluctance to provide straightforward answers

and engage in discussions about the transfer process as characteristics of resistance from four-year colleges to overtures about transfer. Respondents at another community college described other efforts at developing relationships with some elite institutions as unequal, and even “hostile.” Describing the sort of a highly selective university that one community college chose not to pursue, respondents noted “It’s a school for rich kids. They don’t need us.” “We never see [recruitment] people from [the university] on campus. No one ever calls us. They aren’t interested in reaching out to us.”

Respondents from two community colleges that each partnered with an elite public institutions noted the difficulties in creating relationships posed by the selectivity of the institutions. The “cultural divide” was often related to the status of the institution and was felt most acutely at the community college level. Issues of relative institutional status continue to endure in higher education and may argue for partnerships being initiated by four-year colleges and universities—though with careful thought given to the perceptions of potential community college partners. At one four-year college, several respondents indicated that many community college faculty and staff were initially suspicious of the program to recruit transfer students. One noted that some community college faculty

looked at this as a skimming opportunity. To some degree we were in the business of wrecking plans. If a student in the dental hygienist course takes an elective in American literature and ends up at [our college for the summer program], implicitly and explicitly we are robbing the ranks of the dental hygienist programs of one of its star students.

Perceived inequalities in status can also cause stress in a partnership. One faculty member from a four-year institution who taught in a program that was jointly run by two- and four-year faculty noted that she has experienced some hostility and defensiveness on the part of community college faculty. She believed that some of the community college faculty felt that they were perceived as inferior. Structures, such as program advisory committees on which

faculty from both the two- and four-year institutions sit, can provide a venue for airing feelings and perceptions and resolving conflicts.

Faculty and staff who engaged directly with recruiting, advising, and providing ongoing supports to transfer students were often involved in close collaboration with their counterparts at peer institutions as well as two-year feeder colleges. These individuals stewarded ongoing articulation and collaborative partnership agreements and had developed an incisive, detailed understanding of the institutional policy framework in both settings affecting the transfer of community college students to the selective four-year setting. In one case, a two-year community college transfer advisor spent a year's sabbatical at the financial aid office of the selective institution nearby, an institution which attracted the majority of transfer students from his college. After returning to his home institution, this individual was acknowledged by the financial aid staff at the selective institution as more knowledgeable about their internal policies than many of their peers within their own institution. Such specialized knowledge of the unique features of a specific selective institution was highly valued by student services staff at institutions in the study; in one case where staff resources allocated to transfer already existed, it was felt that it may be necessary to hire additional staff whose sole responsibility would be to support students transferring to selective institutions only.

The strategic use of staff supports targeted at recruiting, enrolling and supporting community college transfers focuses on building personal, face-to-face contacts and networks. Respondents noted that such relationships evolve through the dedication of the individuals. However, certain formal structures do foster and reinforce relationship-building. For example, creating positions with designated liaison responsibilities between two institutions can assure that continuity of a given partnership does not rely solely on the personality or presence of a

specific individual. Some staff, charged with sustaining these relationships, note that continuity and openness seemed more likely to result in tangible benefits for students. One person who was interviewed noted that students benefited from the help of individuals who were deeply familiar with the practices, policies, and institutional culture of the institution to which students were transferring.

Many of the programs for transfer students rely on professional relationships among administrators, staff, and faculty:

- ***Belasco Community College*** faculty, staff, administrators have developed close relationships with their counterparts at Clawson University and are skilled advisors to their students about making appropriate choices for transfer. For example, transfer center staff at Belasco and Clawson collaborated on jointly sponsored conferences and events. A Belasco faculty member consults regularly with one of the deans at Clawson regarding curriculum. Many of these relationships were informal and characterized by phone conversations to clarify issues related to courses or consult about individual students.
- Faculty members at ***Entwhistle Community College*** utilize an array of professional networks to help their students transfer to four-year institutions. For example, faculty members use their connections from graduate school to put their students in contact with faculty at four-year universities. Also, faculty members at Entwhistle often know where their colleagues went to graduate school, and they will refer their students to other faculty members who attended a particular institution in which the student is interested.
- The Associate Vice-Provost at Pendleton University contacts the president at Twin Peaks Community College three times per year in order to “encourage presidents to provide support for the programs, and maintain transfer as a high priority.”

- Two staff members work at both Pendleton University and at Twin Peaks Community College. They work directly with students and Twin Peaks Transfer Center personnel, further creating relationships and connections that promote transfer.
- Transfer counselors at Ardweather University communicate frequently with admissions staff members at four-year institutions regarding articulation agreements and course-taking expectations for transfer students. They also fulfill a liaison role with faculty members at their own institution. Each year, the list of faculty program chairs at Entwhistle Community College is divided up among the counseling center staff. All staff members, not just the transfer counselors, work with the program chairs to keep them informed of transfer requirements. In return, the faculty members discuss any new initiatives or outreach in which they are involved with four-year institutions.

Case study findings showcase a variety of partnerships that aim to recruit, enroll, and support low-income community college student transfers to highly selective four-year institutions. The following are descriptions of representative types of partnerships identified in the study. A more extensive list of partnerships appears in Appendix C.

Table 6. Exemplary Partnerships for Recruiting, Enrolling, and Supporting Low-income Community College Transfer Students

Type of Partnership Or Partnership Function	Description	Benefits, Critical Features, Defining Characteristics
<p>Partnership for recruitment and orientation of students</p>	<p><i>Alpha College at Clawson University</i> works closely with the Transfer Center at Belasco Community College to recruit and orient community college transfer students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Alpha College holds regularly scheduled office hours at Belasco Community College to meet with prospective students and interested faculty and staff at the nearby. ▪ Transfer advisors from the college meet with community college faculty and their students to orient them to the curriculum and recent programmatic changes. ▪ College transfer advisors, who typically have training in student development, present at statewide meetings, participate in multi-institutional recruitment fairs, and meet with their counterparts at local community colleges on a regular basis.
<p>Partnership involving recruiting and orienting targeted populations of students</p>	<p><i>Inner City College Collaborative</i> is administered by an umbrella organization for transfer at Pendleton University with the goal of improving transfer rates for underrepresented, underserved, and low-income students at the nine Inner City College District campuses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Opportunities for Pendleton faculty who teach gatekeeper courses to discuss curriculum. ▪ Peer advising on navigating the community college strategically and fulfill the requirements for transfer in a timely manner. ▪ Professional development for staff to improve support for transfer students.
<p>Partnership to improve academic and social performance of students</p>	<p><i>Transfer Opportunity (TO)</i> is an intensive five-week summer residential program held at Tewksbury College and developed collaboratively by Tewksbury and community college faculty. The program for first-generation community college students drawn from groups that are underrepresented in higher education is designed to develop participants' personal agency and to encourage them to consider a number of different four-year options.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Intensive five-week residential program. ▪ Faculty-developed partnership administered by a faculty steering committee. ▪ Team teaching between faculty at the two- and four-year campuses. ▪ Students take Tewksbury College courses at the 100 level. ▪ Peer mentoring. ▪ Dedicated scholarship money. ▪ Tewksbury College admissions and financial aid

Type of Partnership Or Partnership Function	Description	Benefits, Critical Features, Defining Characteristics
		staff, and faculty provide financial aid counseling for students.
Partnership involving specific fields of study	<i>The Science Transfer Association (STA)</i> is a partnership between Greenmeade University’s Science Scholarship Program (SSP) and three selected community colleges. STA helps undergraduate students from diverse social, cultural and economic backgrounds to succeed in the biological sciences and become competitively qualified for admission into medical schools and graduate programs that lead to science careers. Many science students from the local partner college have entered this program and successfully transferred to Greenmeade University.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transfer Seminar teaches students the culture of the University and science through lectures, workshops, tours, and student, faculty, and staff panels. ▪ Competitive Research Fellowship to conduct primary research under a Greenmeade faculty mentor in the Biological Sciences. ▪ Steering Committee Meetings comprised of STA staff, faculty, and administrators from participating community colleges. ▪ Science Transfer Day for community college students, faculty and staff provides information on the requirements of a science major at Greenmeade. ▪ Pre-Fall Transfer Orientation offers mentoring from current science students, as well as planning for current courses and careers. ▪ Biology course taught on the Greenmeade Campus .
Partnership involving professional development	<i>Regional Statewide Conference.</i> Transfer advisors from two Clawson departments hold a regularly scheduled drive-in conference for community college and University student services personnel addressing student development issues related to transfer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Opportunities for faculty and staff from transfer partnerships to develop a common professional development agenda related to transfer. ▪ Public venue for sharing locally generated strategies for responding to recruiting, orientation, and student support issues unique to the area.
Partnership involving faculty advisory boards	<i>Departmental Advisory Boards.</i> Several academic departments at Entwhistle Community College have advisory boards that include faculty members from four-year institutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discuss curricular changes at Entwhistle and at the four-year institutions represented on the board.

Type of Partnership Or Partnership Function	Description	Benefits, Critical Features, Defining Characteristics
Partnership for program review and articulation	<i>Beta College at Clawson University</i> conducts regular program reviews with community colleges in the system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Beta College individually with representatives from each of the multiple two-year college campuses. ▪ Reviews program requirements. ▪ Reviews modifications in prerequisites and related admissions criteria. ▪ Updates the program of study.
Partnership involving state articulation agreements	<i>Statewide Articulation Agreements.</i> Transfer to Clawson University is driven by an articulation agreement which guarantees that community college transfer students who have completed the Associate of Arts degree may enter the upper division of one of the state universities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The transition of students from the two- to four-year system is linked to a unified course numbering system and guided by a statewide Articulation Coordinating Committee. ▪ On-line technologies facilitate critical interactions between students and the institution, including all functions related to admission, registration, grading, financial aid, and universal tracking of student progress toward degree attainment. ▪ Discipline-specific articulation agreements exist across institutions. ▪ Cadre of articulation officers have been hired and trained at both the community college and University levels.
Partnership involving articulation agreements for private institutions	<i>Collaborative Agreements.</i> Merryfield College and Crestfield College enter into collaborative agreements with community colleges that are based on respect and trust.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Agreements, continually updated through dialogue rather than a codified contract, are efficient to manage. ▪ Create a smooth process for students and staff involved in transfer as well as a pipeline for high-achieving students of varied backgrounds.
Partnership involving transfer agreement	<i>Guaranteed Transfer Agreements.</i> Both Alpha and Beta Colleges provide “guaranteed transfer” options to selected applicants who are not initially	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The “guaranteed transfer” policy allows these Colleges to guarantee a student admission to a future class, if the applicant completes a set of

Type of Partnership Or Partnership Function	Description	Benefits, Critical Features, Defining Characteristics
	offered admission to Ardweather University.	courses at another institution with a minimum GPA of 3.0.
Partnership involving transfer agreement	<i>Limited Transfer Agreement.</i> Beta College also has a “Limited Transfer Agreement” with 15 community colleges, including Entwhistle Community College.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The “limited” agreement specifies course equivalents and communicates GPA expectations, but unlike the “guaranteed” agreement, admission is not automatic.
Partnership involving accreditation	<i>Comprehensive Transfer Program (CTP).</i> CTP is a network of honors programs that participate in an “accreditation-like” review in order to be certified by Pendleton University as an official CTP institution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review process occurs every few years for each participating community college and includes a self-study and a site visit which assesses levels of student participation, the content of specialized honors courses, and the structure and function of CTP programs and activities. ▪ Review team is made up of Pendleton and community college representatives. ▪ Students who enroll in a CTP program by taking designated honors courses and maintaining a minimum GPA are given priority for admission to the College of Arts and Sciences at Pendleton. ▪ Approximately 1,000 students attend a CTP conference to get advice about the transfer process in general and Pendleton in particular. CTP students who are currently enrolled at Pendleton serve as speakers who provide prospective community college transfer students with tips for success. ▪ Once at Pendleton, CTP students engage in research with faculty, are required to maintain a B average and are eligible for special scholarships specifically designated for CTP students.
Partnership with K-12	<i>LadderWays</i> , housed in Beta College at Clawson University, is a cooperative arrangement with four	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Professional development for middle- and high-school teachers who teach students in the

Type of Partnership Or Partnership Function	Description	Benefits, Critical Features, Defining Characteristics
Systems	community colleges in the state designed to stimulate interest in Math and Science among students of color, grades 6-12, and prepare them for college.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> program. ▪ Residential summer camp. ▪ Classroom and laboratory-based work. ▪ Field experiences in museums, engineering facilities, and laboratories on the Clawson University campus.
Partnership Involving Resources	Merryfield College rents classroom space to Calisto Community College to offer community college courses on the Merryfield campus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Allows community college students based around the local region to take classes closer to home but in a college setting. ▪ Provides potential Merryfield students the opportunity to acclimate to the “intimidating” campus.

Programs and Practices for Supporting Community College Transfer Students

The argument for student-centered practices in higher education was first advanced in the 1960s when colleges and universities began to admit a new wave of diverse students. No longer receptacles for the linear delivery of information, students emerged as individuals with distinct learning styles and developmental needs. In response centers for teaching and learning proliferated (Lindquist, 1978). Student affairs offices expanded to accommodate the growing co-curricular needs and expectations of a broader representation of students (Brady, 1999). By the mid-1990s, some had declared that a paradigm shift from producing instruction to producing learning was underway, with a focus on comprehensive and reengineered learning environments that were geared to facilitate successful learning for a broad range of students (Barr & Tagg, 1995).

Inquiry into the nature of partnerships between two- and four-year institutions revealed an array of student-centered programs addressing the multiple needs of high achieving low-income community college students—from recruitment to post-enrollment. Well-resourced transfer centers employ multiple methods, including websites, transfer fairs, and one-on-one counseling to reach potential transfer students. Often these centers work in collaboration with four-year institutions.

Exemplary honors programs utilize specific pedagogies, such as learning communities and rigorous assignments that are designed to prepare students for the academic challenges of the four-year setting. The director of an honors program at one community college works closely with students on writing to show them that “what they are doing is what professionals in the field do,” and to prepare them for the kind of research they will do at graduate school. The honors colloquium is designed to give students “too much to read” to the point where they are

“overwhelmed” and must learn to read selectively in order to grasp the essential information that they will need.

Community colleges have long acknowledged the centrality of strong student-centered advising to complement the multiple missions around which their programs and practices are focused. Many faculty, because of their scholarly collaboration with their four-year counterparts, are attuned to the unique academic demands of elite institutions. Student services personnel can contribute their expertise related to financial aid, student life, and college success strategies at four-year institutions.

Students who are academically ready to undertake a college education at highly selective colleges and universities sometimes find that their backgrounds do not prepare them for the culture of these institutions, nor do these institutions take steps to ease the transitions for students who “make the leap.” Students without the knowledge or skills to interpret and navigate the culture of highly selective institutions may experience an erosion of academic confidence in spite of ability (Wolf-Wendel, et al., 2004). Those with established family and community ties may find it difficult to pull up roots and move to an unfamiliar place (Cooper, et al., 1994) where they may need special accommodations to make the transition successfully. Some recruitment programs provide students with a comprehensive introduction to academic life on highly selective four-year campuses. These programs often include residential components, an introduction to the coursework expected at four-year settings, intensive tutoring, and other kinds of individualized attention that helps buttress their confidence and sharpen their academic skills.

A number of programs target low-income minority students for special supports. Morphew et al. (2001) identify a *commitment to student diversity* on the part of both partner institutions and *appropriate kinds of services* to support the acclimation of incoming transfers.

The case study research revealed a number of programs to recruit and orient low-income students and minority students, features which often intersect. Programs, such as the Transfer Summer Program at Pendleton University that orient African American and Latino/a students to a new culture and provide ongoing supports to help students handle issues as they come up are important to help students adjust to a radically different environment.

The importance of personalized attention from trusted adults and peers was underscored by respondents at most of the sites who recognize the kinds of personal upheavals that many low-income students undergo, during the process of first considering transfer to a highly selective four-year institutions as an educational option through ultimately making a transition to such a site. Peer mentors with similar backgrounds as prospective transfer students can be invaluable in recruiting and supporting these students. Worth noting is the power of former transfer students whose experience and advice community college students, many of them uncertain about their ability to master the academic work and cultural expectations of a highly selective campus, can trust. A number of the programs described below involve students from low-income backgrounds who had successfully transferred to elite four-year campuses. Respondents noted that these students were especially effective at recruiting potential transfer students and mentoring them once they matriculate to a four-year institution. In addition, these students return to community college campuses prepared to advocate for necessary institutional changes to facilitate transfer, notions that the following quotation captures.

Well, I'm a very big advocate, just like [the director of the tutoring center], of trying to get students to their highest level. And when I was in my senior year at [X College], I took six candidates that [he] had thought would also [qualify for the Davis Scholars] on the campus tour [and] had them meet the right people. I had them meet the Dean of the Davis Scholars to try to foster that transfer. [Students who did well at the community college] feel a little insecure about it. All of a sudden, you're going to attend this Ivy League college, and you have a lot of doubts. So I wanted to help them, and one of the things that I've been doing is trying to make transfer to selective colleges more visible on

the [community college] campus. Because when I was a 4.0 student, I never got anything. I was never offered information on transfer [to selective colleges]. I was never offered honors or Phi Beta Kappa. There was transfer information on the walls in the transfer office for local state colleges, but [the transfer process] had to be initiated by the student. And if you're a timid little student who doesn't know anything, you wouldn't go anywhere. (Pak, et al., 2006)

Even with extensive preparation prior to matriculation at a selective school, many transfers struggle academically during their first semester while trying to adapt to the new setting (Harbin, 1997). Case study findings supported this observation. At one campus, faculty and staff had learned to expect this phenomenon and were available to lend extra academic and emotional support to students who were struggling with the transition.

Many respondents at four-year settings were reluctant to discuss specific academic supports that low-income community college students would need once they have transferred to an elite setting, preferring to place the responsibility for inadequate academic preparation on community colleges. Some, however, recognized that community colleges are constrained by limited resources and diffuse missions and may not be able to offer the same kinds of educational experiences that students would receive at a highly selective institution. A few four-year respondents broached the topic of the importance of accommodating a range of learning styles, not only those of low-income transfers, but of native students as well. One four-year faculty member commented that community colleges have long been leaders in developing pedagogies that are sensitive to the ways in which students from diverse cultural backgrounds learn and that can be adapted to four-year settings. Such things as multidisciplinary learning communities, Teaching and Learning Centers, comprehensive peer tutoring, supplemental instructional strategies provide a context which complements learning capacities that all students bring to the academic experience.

The following descriptions characterize programs aimed at recruiting, enrolling and supporting low-income community college transfer students. A more extensive and detailed list of programs appears in Appendix D.

Table 7. Exemplary Programs and Practices to Recruitment, Enroll, and Support Low-income Community College Transfer Students

Type of Program or Program Function	Description	Benefits, Critical Features, Defining Characteristics
Recruitment program	<i>Prep for Transfer (PFT)</i> is a one-week summer residential program held at Pendleton University for 100 current community college students and high school seniors on their way to community college to prepare students for transfer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mock lectures and workshops. ▪ Academic activities intended to expose students to academic life at a four-year institution. ▪ After the summer, PFT participants take part in Scholar Workshops at Pendleton once per quarter on various topics including identity development.
Recruitment and orientation program	<i>The Student Transfer Organization (STO)</i> comprises representatives from various service units from the Greenmeade University campus, including the Office of Undergraduate Admissions, the Academic Achievement Programs, the Transfer Center, and New Student Services and aims to provide potential transfer students with details about student life and the many programs and services offered at Greenmeade in order to encourage them to enroll. Each year this group plans, organizes and participates in events directed for newly admitted transfer students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Receptions featuring a faculty speaker, a welcome message from the director of undergraduate admissions, a panel of student speakers. ▪ Current Greenmeade students serve as ambassadors and share their experiences. ▪ Campus representatives present keynote speeches.
Programs Targeting Specific Student Populations	<i>The Transfer Now Program (TNP)</i> is a six-week summer program geared toward African American students from three community colleges who are likely to qualify for admission to Pendleton University.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Workshops. ▪ One-on-one interviews with admissions officers. ▪ Essay writing workshops. ▪ Gatherings with faculty members.
Recruitment program involving pre-collegiate programs	<i>The Transfer Collaborative</i> is an educational outreach program at Greenmeade College designed to increase the academic preparation and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate and critical information to help students select transferable coursework that will ultimately lead to eligibility for admission

Type of Program or Program Function	Description	Benefits, Critical Features, Defining Characteristics
	<p>opportunity for full educational access for traditionally disadvantaged prospective Greenmeade students currently attending one of the community colleges in the area. The program was developed to provide a pipeline for high school graduates of Greenmeade’s pre-collegiate academic outreach programs who chose to attend a state community college prior to transferring to the University. Pre-collegiate programs include school/university partnerships, an Upward Bound program, and a variety of academic outreach programs.</p>	<p>to Greenmeade.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistance with planning students’ coursework for each term at their community college. Courses are selected to establish university eligibility, general education requirements, and major specific pre-requisites. • Academic progress is closely monitored by the Transfer Collaborative staff, and individual recommendations offered when appropriate. • Assistance with the application process. Admissions, financial aid, and scholarship information is provided.
<p>Orientation program</p>	<p><i>The Transfer Summer Program (TSP)</i> was created at Pendleton University to facilitate the transition of admitted transfer students who are low-income, first-generation or underrepresented minorities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Intensive, six-week academic program, part residential and part commuter, with courses in academic writing and research, and courses related to specific academic majors. ▪ Research course that introduces transfer students to faculty, graduate students, and the research process. ▪ Students completing the program earn 12 units toward their degree.
<p>Program at the community college level that recruits and prepares students for transfer</p>	<p><i>Crestfield College</i> accepts all Honors Program courses from Tuscany Community College. Forty percent of transfer students at Tuscany take at least one honors course.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tuscany faculty send promising students to the honors program director who works with them on academic self-esteem and introduces the transfer option. ▪ Honors courses are set up as learning communities taught by pairs of faculty from across the college. ▪ Students move through the program in a cohort. ▪ Honors colloquium instructors focus on

Type of Program or Program Function	Description	Benefits, Critical Features, Defining Characteristics
		<p>encouraging self-directed scholarship with a mentor and intensive reading and writing in ways that prepare students for advanced work in a four-year liberal arts program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Writing and research assignments geared to introduce students to graduate-level work.
Transfer centers	<p><i>The Counseling Center</i> at Entwhistle Community College provides all personal, academic, career, and transfer counseling for students, with specific services geared to transfer to Ardweather University.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Weekly transfer workshops for students, which focus on application and financial aid processes. ▪ Presentations in English classes each semester, which reach nearly every student in the college. ▪ Presentations at new student orientation. ▪ A “transfer fair” that hosts admissions representatives from four-year institutions. ▪ One-on-one counseling to help with course identification ▪ Transfer charts that are aligned with many programs in Beta College and the Alpha College at Ardweather University.
Program involving transfer center staff	<p><i>Traveling Transfer Student Admissions Counselors.</i> Pendleton University’s transfer student admission counselors visit the local feeder community colleges on a regular basis to meet with prospective transfer students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Outreach to students who may not make an initial contact with the university and to connect with students in an environment that is familiar to them. ▪ Staff members assigned to visit ten schools weekly to conduct one-on-one counseling sessions, classroom presentations, and application and personal statement workshops.

Type of Program or Program Function	Description	Benefits, Critical Features, Defining Characteristics
Peer support program	<i>Beta College's Transfers Together program</i> at Ardweather University was developed in response to conversations about improving programs and services that admissions and student services staff had with current transfer students. Students reported a need for more contact with current transfer students, especially prior to orientation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Twenty current transfer students serve as peer mentors to incoming community college transfer students. ▪ Peer mentors communicate with the transfer students over the summer, welcome them at orientation, and meet periodically with them during their first semester. ▪ A transfer student panel at orientation also provides staff members with important feedback about programs and services.
Academic support programs	<i>A teaching and learning center</i> using the expertise of faculty who taught in a program to support low-income community college students at Tewksbury College, is designed to support all students, including transfer students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Faculty writing specialist. ▪ Faculty quantitative specialist. ▪ Paid peer tutors, two-thirds of whom are students of color. ▪ A peer learning component, which focuses solely on writing. ▪ A commitment to “incremental” learning rather than “performance-based” support and to a notion that “any student can be a better student.”

Type of Program or Program Function	Description	Benefits, Critical Features, Defining Characteristics
Other Exemplary Practices	<i>Transfer admissions practices.</i> The admissions offices at Ardweather have developed strong practices that promote transfer. According to the director of undergraduate admissions, this level of staff commitment sets Ardweather University apart from its peer institutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Each of the seven undergraduate colleges has an admissions staff person who is assigned responsibility for transfer students. In the larger colleges, this is a full-time role. ▪ Each fall, admissions staff members in Alpha College at Ardweather collaborate to host “Transfer Day,” which provides an opportunity for potential transfer students to learn about the academic programs, financial aid services, and admissions processes. ▪ Faculty, admissions staff, and current transfer students serve on panels and address questions. ▪ The event is attended by transfer counselors from nearby community colleges, including Entwhistle Community College, who bring prospective students with them to the event.

Financial Aid

As Kahlenberg (2004) notes, “students from less fortunate circumstances are less likely to attend college in part because they are not as well prepared on average, but inadequate financial aid represents a significant barrier.” Institutions preparing to admit more low-income community college transfer students will need to examine their financial aid policies in light of the circumstances and needs of this population, and consider changes in financial aid policies and practices (Lumina Foundation for Education, 2005).

Given the unique differences in history, institutional type, and mission of selective institutions interested in admitting increasing numbers of transfer students from community colleges, it is not possible to make generalizable recommendations about how to define and enact local financial aid policies and practices which would complement this goal. Apart from the specific financial aid programs and policies that interviewers learned about during site visits, however, there are some general themes related to financial aid which institutions seeking more transfer students from community colleges may consider.

Selected sites recognized the need for financial aid policies that are tailored specifically to the unique circumstances of students transferring from community colleges. Institutions took a “broad-and-deep” approach, integrating financial aid concerns in their comprehensive student support programs, while at the same time implementing policies and practices that reflected consideration of the specific needs of students transferring from two-year public institutions.

Needs for More Information

According to respondents, a commonly shared concern about community college students interested in transferring to selective institutions was the variable level of expertise these

students seem to have about financial aid policy in general, as well as the specific nuances of institution-level aid policies at the four-year colleges to which they applied.

Many community college students have a limited understanding of the differences in cost—and the related financial policies designed to address these costs—between the two- and four-year settings. However, one common assumption among many community college students is that the higher cost of continuing at a selective four-year institution dissuades them from considering selective options in the first place. As one respondent noted,

You hear it all the time. ‘I can’t afford [this university].’ They look at our price tag and assume that they can’t come here. But they don’t understand how [the university] awards aid. [The university] is pretty generous to transfer students. But the price tag limits applications.

When students do consider selective institutions, they are often unaware of the complex range of options available to them in meeting these increased costs.

A number of student services personnel noted this lack of awareness of the complexity of financial aid planning at four-year institutions, various sources of institutional aid, including blended packages of aid, specialized scholarships, and increased levels of aid at four-year settings. Institutions also reported that students were often unaware of the importance of maintaining full-time status in sustaining financial aid awards over time.

A complementary barrier is the lack of knowledge on behalf of financial aid personnel at both the four- and two-year setting about specific types of aid policies and practices which aid or deter prospective community college transfer students from attending. Part of this knowledge gap may emerge from the insufficient communication from the senior leadership of the institution about the institutional value for the presence of low-income community college transfer students. Such leadership at some selected campuses had stimulated creative thinking

about how to respond to the unique concerns of community college students. To respond to the need for ongoing professional development, one institution created its “Student Support Awareness Consortium,” a collaborative committee comprising representatives from financial aid offices at the four-year setting and their counterparts from two-year feeder institutions. Meeting regularly throughout the academic term, the group’s aim is to clarify policies and practices which directly affect transfer students and to provide opportunities for informal relationship building which can facilitate tailoring aid packages to the needs of specific students. These sorts of inter-organizational partnerships are powerful mechanisms for ongoing professional development.

Institutional financial aid policies are often tailored to the needs of native students who attend full time for a period of four years, have few if any family responsibilities, and have access to counselors and/or family members who can help them understand multiple financial aid options and decipher complicated application processes. While data from the site visits reveal a variety of approaches to making it financially viable for low-income community college students to attend highly selective institutions, a number of barriers continue to exist at some institutions. Forced by circumstances to attend college part-time, low-income transfer students may lose their eligibility for institutional aid at some highly selective settings. As one financial aid administrator explained:

If you are a low-income student and your parent contribution was zero, then you are getting 10 to 15 thousand in grant aid. And this is gone [if you attend part time]. Most of them can’t do it. A low-income student isn’t going to be able to borrow 10 or 15 thousand dollars from a bank.

Institutions that place a great deal of importance on the value of the *four-year* experience for students invest more financial aid in building the freshmen class rather than funneling resources to transfer students. One respondent candidly admitted, “The real mobility for transfer

students is for those who are full paying. Many needy students have no reason to think to apply to [the institution] for transfer.”

Colleges and universities that limit financial aid awards to number of semesters—six semesters for sophomore transfers and four for juniors—penalize students who have to balance other responsibilities with school. A student who must take a semester’s leave forfeits a portion of the financial aid package and will have to sink deeper into debt in order to graduate.

Even when loans are available to low-income students, many are reluctant to assume a significant debt. Much of the literature on low-income students’ views on financial aid refers to lack of information or culturally oriented notions about debt aversion that can be overcome with good information and education about financial aid. Respondents at one community college, however, were troubled by the ethical issues involved in counseling low-income students to take on debt. They noted that they cannot fully reassure a student who is anxious about taking on a debt burden when there are no guarantees that the student will be able to pay it back in a continually shifting job market and economy.

Broad-based Policies for Aid

The degree to which institutions admitted students on a “needs-blind” basis was a particularly powerful factor in attracting, admitting, and sustaining low-income student enrollments. Very few of the selected institutions were able to sustain a “needs-blind” policy, and those that did were clear that such policies were important to fulfilling their mission of recruiting low-income students; however, these same institutions noted such admissions policies were extremely expensive and forced them to limit the numbers of students who could be admitted on that basis. Ironically, institutions with significant numbers of low-income students,

all of whom received complete financial aid support, indicated that they could never increase the current numbers of enrolled students without jeopardizing the budgetary resources available for other college-wide systems, including faculty salaries. In lieu of “needs-blind” policies, other institutions attempted to provide students with information about various sources of financial aid, with a special focus on scholarships. In addition, these same institutions provided comprehensive student support programs, designed specifically for two-year transfer students, which included direct assistance with completing financial aid applications, money management counseling, and academic assistance to assure that students could maintain required grade point averages for specific aid packages.

Institutions which were part of the study acknowledged that increasing the numbers of low-income community college students among their ranks requires thoughtful reallocation of institutional resources. Examples of such skilled reallocation include:

- Engaging in capital campaigns aimed at increasing the amount of funds specifically dedicated to supporting scholarships for community college transfer students.
- Earmarking significant portions of the existing endowments to sustain current initiatives and develop and broaden their impact. Presidents in some institutions aggressively sought trustee support to identify line items within their existing institutional endowments to support their own transfer support programs. Trustees at some institutions donated large sums of money, aimed specifically at programs supporting the transfer of students from low-income backgrounds.
- Creating new budgets which reallocate resources traditionally used for another purpose in order to build financial aid resources for low-income students. One institution changed

the way in which it configured its student meal plan so that the resulting cost-savings would be used to support low-income student scholarships.

- Many institutions, using newly generated funds or monies gained through budgetary reallocation, created a pool of institutional scholarships, available specifically to low-income students from community college backgrounds.

Other institutions, through auditing their existing financial aid policies and practices, were able to uncover some hidden barriers which functionally constrained community college students from applying. For instance:

- One institution changed its long-held policy of raising the debt-level for incoming transfer students to match those of native students.
- Another institution is considering changing the way it defines students' financial autonomy from their parents so that more students from non-traditional backgrounds will qualify for institutional aid.
- A third institution has an open-door policy which is broadly appreciated across the college campus; the policy encourages students with aid plans to request additional aid if fiscal exigencies threaten their ongoing attendance and academic achievement.

Dedicated Resources

An important indicator of the institutionalization of various colleges' interests in recruiting, admitting, orienting, and providing ongoing supports to community college transfer students is the extent to which institutional resources are dedicated and reserved over time for these specific purposes. Evidence of an institution's commitment, for example, may be found in the number of line staff whose responsibilities are primarily focused on serving community college transfer students. Examples of other dedicated resources include specialized offices and programs aimed to meet the unique needs of transfer students; separate, detailed web pages devoted to the needs of the transfer population; specialized outreach initiatives aimed at community college recruiting, and extended orientation programs for two-year transfer students, with an emphasis on academic achievement and social integration. Key areas in which institutions dedicated resources were clustered into two main areas: (1) student services and supports, including recruiting and advising; and, (2) information technology.

Student Services and Supports: Recruiting

Both two- and four-year institutions recognized the importance of an active, consistent, and assertive approach to recruiting students from community colleges. Two-year institutions reported regularly scheduled recruitment activities, featuring admissions representatives from the selective four-year institutions with which they have primary relationships. At a public university, each of the colleges has reserved staff resources for the sole purpose of recruiting students from community colleges statewide to their respective programs. In addition to marketing the college and university offerings to prospective students, these staff collaborate on local and statewide recruiting initiatives, including transfer fairs, specialized workshops for

faculty teaching in related programs at community colleges, and conferences focusing on improving transfer policies and practices aimed specifically at two-year transfer candidates.

Student Services and Supports: Advising

Two- and four-year institutions recognized the importance of early identification of students who seem likely to transfer to selective four-year settings. Academic advising played a critical role in such identification efforts and in providing individualized, student-centered supports which can facilitate information sharing about attendance at elite institutions. Each of the community colleges which acted as a feeder institution for a four-year selective counterpart had staff positions dedicated specifically to advising students for transfer. For the most part, these staff were integrated into college-wide transfer centers. For example, in some institutions where faculty were not officially charged with advising, a transfer center, reporting to the college's academic dean and staffed by a large number of full- and part-time professional advisors, worked with students throughout the year. A specific focus of particular centers was on the course and program requirements of selective institutions which attracted the majority of the two-year transfer degree students.

One community college, with a relatively large number of students transferring to a variety of elite institutions, acknowledged only recently that it needed to institute new structures for better addressing the needs of its potential transfer population. An administrator at this institution noted that the transfer advising function would be dispersed more broadly across the institution and would extend beyond student services staff to faculty. In addition, all advising activities, including those directly related to transfer students would be transferred to the academic wing of

the institution. Such shifts recognized the critical importance of strong advising as an essential component of the academic experience.

Four-year institutions engaged in adding new transfer advisors decided to embed these initiatives within the academic wing of the institution, rather than in student affairs. Faculty in these settings were encouraged to serve as advisors within these institutions. Institutions where such changes were occurring acknowledged the intrinsic relationships between advising and academic performance. In addition, such centers were perceived to be excellent faculty-development opportunities, introducing faculty to the various strengths and needs of transfer students so that they could consider how their existing teaching and learning strategies might be modified. Transfer advisors in some four-year institutions continued to advise students once they had been admitted. For example, the Associate Director of one transfer program—a tenured faculty member—also serves as the liaison to accepted transfer students during the summer before and semester after their enrollment.

Diversification of responsibility of staff who are skilled in supporting transfer students is an important practice at selective institutions. A transfer center at one institution provides a useful example of such diversification. One staff person in the center focuses primarily on traditional-age transfers in recruitment and orientation operations while her counterpart focuses primarily on non-traditional student transfers; at the same time, she also serves as an ongoing advisor for all admitted transfer students as they adjust to their first semester. Another individual is responsible for recruiting efforts and building and sustaining trusted relationships with area community colleges as well as planning orientation events. The center director serves on the admissions committee for all transfer applications and reports to the Vice-President for

Enrollment in relation to the college's overall recruitment goals, which include community college transfer students.

Staff dedicated to supporting transfer initiatives play a myriad of other roles, including:

- Overseeing the processes for assessing students' academic standing and for assisting students to develop an academic plan with their advisor.
- Assisting students who request assistance in developing their educational plan, an outline of how a student intends to use the resources of the college to meet his academic goals.
- At smaller institutions, serving as class deans, whose responsibilities include ongoing monitoring and support of all students enrolled during a given year at the institution

Information Technology

Without exception, the institutions we visited used a variety of forms of information dissemination to aid their efforts to recruit, orient, admit, and provide ongoing support to community college transfer students. Institutions used various modes of public communication to extend their interests in supporting the transfer function, often specifically aimed at community college students, their teachers, advisors, parents, and other interested parties. Institutions also used print media and internet-based applications to market their approaches to transfer, inform key stakeholders about these approaches, recruit potential students, and provide ongoing technical assistance to key audiences. Internet approaches included websites aimed at explaining the transfer process as well as listservs for professionals sharing information about policies, practices, and professional development activities.

Three specific uses of internet-based technology, each addressing a different aspect of the transfer experience, are especially notable:

Technology resources for recruitment and program/course articulation

- In larger, articulated state systems of higher education, the transfer process is streamlined via on-line student-transfer information systems. Designed for multiple stakeholders supporting community college transfer students, these systems display reports of how course credits earned at particular community colleges articulate with programs at four-year institutions system-wide. Often supported through state funds, these systems allow students to quickly access frequently updated information available about inter-institutional transfer statewide. The purpose of these centralized, on-line articulation systems is to facilitate transfer and the academic planning process. In some situations, students who become familiar with the system early in their community college career can plan out their entire two year curriculum and be able to transfer as juniors.
- Institutions with elaborate strategies for recruitment, orientation, admission, and ongoing support of community college transfer students often reflected their approaches in websites focusing specifically on the transfer process. One four-year institution provides a useful site which breaks down the transfer process into manageable steps, extending from selecting a major to applying for financial aid and eventually to the institution itself. Key documents, including applications and curriculum guides are available for download throughout the site. A two-year institution is developing a web-based orientation to their institution with a significant portion devoted to transfer to the nearby selective institution.

Technology resources for ongoing academic support

- Ongoing support for transfer students once they have matriculated to the selective four-year setting is important. Both two- and four-year settings use integrated student

information systems to support tracking of transfer student progress within their respective institutions. In one community college, such a system included a feature that allowed transfer students to compare their academic progress toward their associate's degree with the required course and grade point averages associated with specific programs at the four-year selective setting of the student's choice. Student progress tracking functions built into these systems have provided updated information to administrators about overall student progress disaggregated by status, including transfer. One college has used information from the tracking system to assure that courses are available to all students as they progress through their degree requirements, an important factor in supporting transfer students once they matriculate in the senior institution. It has also yielded information about the numbers of seats afforded to transfer students and their native student counterparts. Because the tracking system exists, transfer students may easily track their progress through courses.

External Environment

This report focuses on internal practices within institutions engaged in recruiting, orienting, and supporting the ongoing success of community college transfer students. However, in some cases, it is important to acknowledge significant features of the policy environment, external to a given institution, which affect the nature of these internal practices. In some instances, the policies and practices of systems of higher education have a direct bearing on the nature, quality, and purpose of college-based policies and related strategies. For example, highly selective institutions—some of which are part of complex, public systems of higher education—may benefit from state policy frameworks that seek to streamline the general nature of partnerships between two- and four-year institutions, especially as they relate to the transfer of students from community colleges to the four-year setting. Policies and practices in individual institutions are often designed to complement or react to those policies shaped by larger external entities aimed at regulating the transfer of students from two- to four-year settings.

The regulatory impact of external policy-making, often generated from State Higher Education Executive Offices (SHEEOs), was noted in our field work in different ways. In many situations, specific statewide policies were designed to assure that students graduating from two-year public institutions with an Associate of Arts degree (or its equivalent) within the same state would be guaranteed admission into one of the state's four-year colleges and universities. As a result, many systems have engaged in efforts to regularize the curriculum, manage enrollments within specific programs and across institutions, and develop specific types of student-centered supports. Such efforts fall into two major categories: (1) curricular regulation, and (2) enrollment management.

Curricular regulation practices include:

- Creating a common numbering system for all courses offered within any two-year institution in the state and articulating the educational outcomes of these courses with admissions requirements for disciplinary majors at all of the four-year institutions statewide;
- Requiring that new program and course offerings developed at the community college be articulated with two or more four-year institutions (public or private) within the state, using course equivalency tables;
- Organizing state-wide regulatory committees, comprising senior officials from both two- and four-year institutions, with the mission of negotiating the development of changes in policy, curricula, and/or practice at multiple levels of either institution, affecting the smooth transfer of students from the two- to four-year setting;
- More closely aligned general education requirements across the two-year institutions such that common professional development and resource sharing opportunities may be developed across a system of two-year institutions. Closer curricular alignment of this sort also provides ongoing opportunities for clarifying articulation points between the exit outcomes of a given two-year curriculum with entry level admissions requirements and course expectations at the four-year institution.

The sequencing of courses within various majors at four-year institutions can become an obstacle to promoting transfer for community college students. When the first two years of a program of study are devoted primarily to general education courses, transfer and articulation are somewhat easier to negotiate with community colleges and their students. However, some majors have begun to push some of their required courses into the second year meaning that community

college transfer students should consider applying in their sophomore year. Such a policy may dissuade community college students from completing the associate's degree.

Enrollment management practices include:

- System-level policies often play a tacit role in enrollment management for the entire system. Enrollments in specific four-year programs may be tracked back to specific two-year institutions offering complementary preparatory programs. Such tracking enhances the possibility of closer alignment of curricular practices within a given program and sets the stage for potential collaborations aimed at enhancing faculty development. In one state system, university recruiters use the statewide tracking system to identify community colleges with the best record for transferring students who do well in their respective programs.
- Statewide articulation agreements can provide guaranteed admissions to highly selective public colleges and universities, yet they are often unwieldy and difficult to track. Those involved in administering articulation agreements described them as needing much attention and updating.
- In states where the public system dominates the landscape of higher education options, system-wide enrollment management forms the basis for discussion about differentiating missions among various institutions to complement the needs of students and to prevent damaging forms of competition among and between institutions vying for similar types of students.

Public awareness of transfer options

Simplification and streamlining efforts for policy and program articulation between two- and four-year institutions creates broader access to the various stakeholders involved in recruiting, orienting, and admitting transfer students from community colleges.

- Streamlining the course numbering system and better articulating admissions policies at both the institutional and program level has made web-based information systems an important public source of information. Admissions personnel at both the four-year and two-year sites, students, their parents, and high school faculty and staff can all access a common body of information about statewide transfer procedures, related requirements, and critical processes and deadlines through system-wide, web-based information databases.

Collectivizing Resources

System-level efforts at streamlining policies and practices which relate to transfer students may result in more efficient use of resources available to the multiple parties engaged within the system. Maximizing the institutional and system-level resources available for supporting transfer students has resulted in many benefits. For example, in one such statewide system, a flagship university implemented a large-scale institutional research (IR) initiative, including an evaluation of the performance of two-year community college transfer students who had transferred there. Performance data from this institution were used as a rationale for developing similar IR efforts at other four-year institutions in the system and were used at the system level to explore performance standards across the network of campuses.

Other uses of collectivized resources have resulted in:

- Transfer centers, staffed by personnel oriented to the overarching system of course numbering and articulation mechanisms at the course, department, program and institutional levels;
- Institution-level websites for the public aimed at orienting potential students to policies and practices unique to that college;
- Statewide professional development opportunities for personnel from both the two- and four-year settings aimed at better understanding the needs of transfer students from community colleges.

By setting forth system-wide policies that strongly suggest or mandate articulation of institutional programs, policies, and practices so that community college students can more easily transfer from one setting to another, policies and practices in the larger environment external to the institution motivate institutional collaboration and encourage institutions to view transfer students from community colleges as vital to their respective commitment to diversifying their student populations.

Recommendations

- Representatives from both two- and four-year institutions can consider participating actively in monitoring committees developed to address the implications of statewide policies intended to regulate transfer from one sector to another.
- State higher education offices can provide consistent oversight of all regulatory bodies aimed at assuring transfer from the two- to four-year sector. Such oversight must include active mediation of emerging conflicts in policy and practice among and between the institutions engaged in the transfer process.

- A tracking system is needed for overseeing multiple agreements, many of which expire without notice, to ensure that course requirements are up-to-date and information about changes is made available to constituents, such as students and transfer counselor, and advisors.
- College-wide curriculum committees that are designed to regulate shifts in curriculum at the four-year institution can account for the impact that such changes may have on potential transfer students from the community college. Joint monitoring committees comprising faculty and staff from high-demand majors and/or admissions staff from both two- and four-year institutions can consult when any changes are made which may affect the courses required of students in the first two years of study.

Transfer Champions

Selective institutions that are actively engaged in facilitating the transfer of higher percentages of community college students are engaged in a wide array of distinctive practices. A significant set of our findings focuses on individuals who are acknowledged both within a given institution and across institutional partnerships as “champions” of the transfer student. Characterized at one institution as “transfer sentinels,” these were individuals who made certain that the interests of transfer students were considered in a variety of decision-making contexts. As one participant in our study noted, many decisions are made assuming students to be traditional-age and living on campus for four years. “Transfer champions” are advocates for transfer students in institutions where such traditionally-age students predominate; they provide a voice—often in the minority—which reminds decision-makers and committee members of the importance of identifying and reflecting on the degree to which any area of program development and evaluation reflects a committed understanding of the uniqueness of transfer students. In addition, these same individuals are committed to empowering transfer students and seem to be among those who are most highly regarded as mentors and advisors by transfer students themselves. (In Section IV of the report, individuals who take an active role as mentors and advisors to individual students are considered “*transfer agents*.”) Typically, advocates for transfer were candid in offering constructive criticism of their own institutions, particularly in regard to policies, practices, and attitudes related to transfer.

Transfer champions included presidents of both two- and four-year institutions as well as other members of the senior executive staff, including Provosts, Associate Provosts, and Deans for both Academic and Student Affairs. In some instances, trustees were identified as active advocates for transfer students. At all types of institutions, administrators and staff dominated

the list of individuals who were considered “champions.” These individuals included project directors of specialized grant-funded programs as well as long-time administrators, charged with leading large sectors of a university or college.

In situations where the President was noted as an active advocate for transfer students, it was easier to find strong advocates among not only the senior executive staff, but throughout the institution. The president of one small four-year college described his commitment:

Some of the very best students I taught were students who for one reason or another faced challenges in high school, spent some time maturing in the workforce, entered and did brilliantly in community college, then transferred and did brilliantly in a four-year College. So I think that the system is critical both in terms of finding the best talent wherever it is and critical in terms of providing multiple points of entry for college opportunity.

In smaller liberal arts institutions, faculty seemed to be more engaged with transfer students than in larger university settings. However, in general, faculty seemed to be less engaged as active advocates for including larger numbers of transfer students within the student body than their counterparts in student services and administration.

Activities of Champions

It is important to note that transfer champions perceived their advocacy as an integral but not defining feature of their work. Their focus on transfer issues functioned on three levels: (1) in their individual commitment to their work; (2) in their commitment to pervasive and deep internal change at their institution; and (3) through their ongoing belief in strong personal relationships housed within carefully nurtured inter-organizational partnerships.

As a result, these individuals integrate their commitment to transfer in a variety of ways, often using their “insider” knowledge of the institution to solve problems for individual students,

advocate for system level change at the institution, or build programs based in strong collaborative partnerships.

Some important examples of the activities of transfer champions:

- A vice-president for academic affairs at a flagship university is a very strong and outspoken champion for the admission of community college transfer students. One of her priorities has been to set up endowed scholarships that are restricted for community college transfer students.
- A mid-level student services administrator at a large university organizes monthly transfer student orientations featuring transfer student panels. These panels highlight in-depth exploration of the experiences of transfer students who have succeeded within the institution and feature presentations done by the students themselves. The administrator notes that an important secondary audience for these presentations is the staff and faculty members in the college who attend these orientations so that, along with their student services staff, they too can “listen to students and improve what they do.”
- A senior cabinet member of a small elite college consistently reminds her peers that the institution must focus its resources as much on transfer recruitment and orientation—including its public marketing materials—as it does on its freshman-year experience programs.
- An associate director of admissions at a large public university actively advocates for successful transfer students to become part of her college’s curriculum committee after hearing student committee members (themselves native, traditionally-age students) complain at a meeting that transfer students do not have to prove their merit by

completing general education requirements at the selective institution before being accepted.

- A senior university administrator spends at least one week each month as a member of statewide recruiting teams from the colleges at her institution, “pounding the pavement” on behalf of attracting high-achieving community college students to the institution.
- One liberal arts college faculty member values her role as a mentor who appreciates the external pressures which affect many transfer students. She keeps coloring books and crayons in her office in case students need to bring their children on campus. Transfer students who are not in her class often appear at her office door on the recommendation of a friend who has been an advisee or student in her class.

Motivations for Champions

Individuals who advocated for transfer students often explained the sources of their commitment. Appreciating the various influences on the experiences of these individuals reinforces the significance of ongoing support for transfer students: many of the college administrators, faculty, and staff who act as champions for transfer and role models for transfer students have themselves successfully navigated the transfer process in their own educational experience. As such, these individuals can provide insight into the types of internal institutional change which may prove most effective in supporting the recruitment, admission, orientation, and ongoing support of these students.

Transfer champions are motivated to advocate for this issue for a number of reasons:

- Their empathy with the experiences of community college transfer students emerges from their personal experience as students from the same or similar circumstances. Many of the champions were themselves community college students from low-income backgrounds, who had made the transition to selective institutions successfully.
- They have a strong commitment to higher education's role in creating levers for community-building characterized by equity and diversity in all forms.
- They appreciate the complexity of student experiences, particularly the barriers which many students have overcome in order to attend selective institutions.
- They perceive the presence of students from low-income backgrounds as an opportunity for institutional and individual learning and change.
- They perceive their own institutions as permeable to pervasive and deep change, particularly as it relates to the successful transfer of community college students.

Leadership of ongoing change within higher education—regardless of the issue—relies heavily on a commitment to new attitudes, behaviors, and structures throughout the complex systems which comprise today's colleges and universities. The experience of transfer champions indicates that there is ongoing work to be done to impress individuals at all levels of an organization of the importance of transfer students as well as the specific knowledge and skills which must inform practices, policies, and programs designed to benefit these students. Champions for transfer existed at all of the institutions which were visited and played multiple and very distinct roles. Any ongoing change initiative aimed at increasing the presence of

transfer students must acknowledge the presence of these champions and integrate their commitment and resources.

The Critical Role of Faculty

Faculty are key to the recruitment, admission, orientation, and ongoing success of community college transfer students to selective and highly selective institutions. As our review of the literature indicates, collaborative networks among faculty and staff aimed at supporting transfer students is of critical importance (Morphew et al., 2001). In addition, ongoing faculty work related to curricular issues is equally significant. The central role that faculty contribute to the ways in which any change initiative is interpreted within the culture of a college or university cannot be underestimated. In smaller, private liberal arts institutions, faculty authority often extends beyond the curriculum to areas of administrative leadership and student affairs-related programs and services. In larger university settings, faculty roles in working with students become critical because of the complexity of life at such large institutions; faculty, through their teaching and advising responsibilities, often function as a student's primary link to the larger institution, its policies, practices, and culture.

Our research reinforces the myriad contributions that faculty make in realizing the mission of a given institution. Beyond their role as teachers and researchers, faculty often work with students as academic advisors. Frequently they are called on to join admissions committees. In terms of curriculum, faculty are the gatekeepers for the creation of new knowledge and the interpretation of this new knowledge in teaching and learning experiences. When faculty serve as program administrators or department chairs, they often facilitate discussions aimed at articulating admissions requirements for students; in addition, they coordinate collaborative program review or certification processes which often can result in formal articulation agreements or long-standing collaborative partnerships between two- and four-year institutions. Such partnerships may focus on assuring articulation of formal policies

and practices between and among two- and four-year institutions; however, frequently, there is a stronger emphasis on informal relationship building, a factor critical to the success of sustaining the duration and quality of any organizational partnership.

Faculty Roles as Campus Leaders

Faculty play powerful formal and informal leadership roles in colleges and universities. In their formal roles as committee chairs, program administrators, or admissions committee members, faculty concretize the mission and values of a particular institution through the ways in which they conduct their work. Through the governance structure at many institutions, faculty can directly affect the degree to which an innovation is adopted across an institution. One faculty member at a college noted that "anything that's going to work in a place like this has to be faculty-driven and faculty-owned."

Faculty Roles in the Teaching and Learning Process

Faculty exert a great deal of influence and authority in the ways in which a college defines its central enterprise, the teaching and learning process. Four-year faculty tended to reject programs and practices that they perceived as remedial, which sometimes limited opportunities for them to change their pedagogy at all. Both two- and four-year faculty, however, reported shifts in their pedagogical practice, based on what they learned from their collaborative involvement with other two- and four-year faculty in activities serving community college transfer students. Faculty at an elite liberal arts college, for example, reported changes in their teaching approaches within their disciplines and their attitudes toward students, in general, based on their involvement in a summer-long academic program serving high-achieving community

college students. Faculty reported that participation in the program prompted their use of teaching techniques that they would not typically use as they returned to teaching native students, such as matching up students with peer writing partners based on their assessment of student skill level. Other four-year faculty commented on how their teaching and their perceptions of students in general had changed as a result of their involvement in extended academic programs aimed at increasing access for potential transfer students from community colleges. One respondent noted that as faculty are sensitized to a greater variety of learning styles, they “are honing [their] empathy”.

As an outcome of working with four-year faculty at elite institutions, community college faculty reported a shift in the ways in which they perceived the potential of their students to succeed in highly selective four-year settings. They observed that long-held perceptions that their students were not capable of doing well in selective institutions were dispelled by their involvement in collaborative work with four-year faculty who were co-teaching partners working with community college transfer students. Through interactions with four-year faculty, community college faculty and transfer staff learned how to advise potential transfer students on what they needed to know in order to gain admissions to four-year institutions. In addition, these same faculty became more skilled at writing letters of recommendation and helping students complete applications to four-year institutions.

Such changes in faculty perception and knowledge on an individual level play out on larger curricular landscapes and in peer relationships among faculty colleagues at the same institution. Faculty who reported changes in their own pedagogy also mentioned sharing these changes with colleagues who were less familiar with community college students. One four-year institution developed small learning communities, designed specifically to meet the needs of

transfer students from the community college to the selective institution. Another group of four-year faculty were encouraged to broaden the kinds of academic and social supports available to all students, based on those that were deemed effective for transfers. In some specialized partnerships between two- and four-year institutions oriented around extended orientation and academic development of community college students, faculty from both sectors collaborate in the recruitment of students as well as the development and implementation of specialized courses. Faculty who collaborate in these endeavors have noted the enormous professional development benefits that are afforded to individuals from both sectors. Perhaps as significant as their ongoing responsibilities related to teaching and learning is that of student advisor and mentor, including academic issues, but often extending to counseling and advising of a more personal, individualized nature.

Faculty Roles as Advisors

Regardless of the ways in which a campus formalizes its policies and procedures related to student advising, faculty will always play a critical role in this endeavor. Because faculty negotiate the central enterprise between students and the institution—the teaching and learning process—their guidance is intrinsic to the ways in which students understand academic programs, their places within them, and how their academic performance relates to their success at the institution. Often, student advising extends far beyond academic consultation per se and includes opportunities for faculty to offer mentoring and counsel that is targeted at students adjusting to the unique demands of college life.

Because of the unique backgrounds of many community college transfer students, four-year faculty may need assistance with understanding the complexities of these particular

students' experiences; in addition, they may need additional technical assistance about community colleges and opportunities for collaboration with their two-year counterparts.

Such opportunities would afford them with learning about the unique mission and culture of two-year institutions, from both an academic and student affairs perspective. In addition, it would provide faculty with an appreciation of the ways in which institutions can work effectively with students who are appropriate for transfer to selective institutions, but come with a very different set of personal and educational experiences than those native students who are typically accepted at their home institutions.

Two-year faculty, on the other hand, may need some help understanding how highly selective institutions work, including the types of academic work and social demands which prevail there. It may also be helpful for community colleges to clarify the importance of the transfer function within their own institutions and how it supports the overall mission of the institution. Some two-year faculty noted that certain of their peers failed to value the transfer of capable students to four-year selective settings, arguing that doing so would deplete the range of students who could successfully complete the two-year vocational program of which they were in charge.

The need for ongoing support for high-quality faculty advising exists at both the two- and four-year institutions. At some two-year settings, transfer counselors sometimes had unrealistically high student loads and little experience with selective institutions; often the counseling took a “packaged” approach guiding students into the same state schools, rather than selective alternatives. At four-year settings, inadequate faculty advising was claimed by one administrator to hinder transfer student success, often occurring during the students' initial period of adjustment:

If we hear about a situation in which a transfer student is struggling, we look at the advising and sometimes discover a breakdown regarding what is best for a student during his or her first semester. We find that unfortunately the student was not advised to take an adequate schedule.

A four-year faculty member acknowledged that some of his colleagues put transfer students into overzealous schedules:

There are a few [faculty advisors] that would have transfer students take two very rigorous courses at the same time, which we would not have any of our first-year students take at the same time. I think of organic chemistry and one of our genetics courses, which are among the most challenging in the college. Some of us advisors would not have any of our students take both of those courses in the same semester, but some advisors would have a transfer student come in and take something like that instead of easing their way into it during their first semester.

Some faculty have unreasonable expectations of the two-year transfer students, either under- or overestimating their capabilities. One seasoned administrator at a selective institution noted that paradoxically faculty do not believe that community college transfer students in general are adequately prepared, but when they are working with specific individuals, they tend to view them as better prepared than they may actually be:

Faculty advisors will have the students' admissions folders. So they will see what they got on their SATs. They will see what courses they had and what their grades were. And the problems come in when the advisors look at those two things and say, 'well, they got a decent SAT score, they got an A in pre-calc, so yes, you can take this calculus course.' But they are not remembering that this is [a highly selective institution]! And just looking at those indicators is not always the best way to make a decision about what courses to recommend, especially in the first semester.

Opportunities for Faculty Development

Because of the critical role that faculty play within institutions, the organizational mechanisms to engage faculty in practices and policies that support transfer is vital. Institutions engaged in best practices related to the recruitment, admission, orientation, and ongoing support of transfer students use a variety of approaches to support and engage faculty. Given the

complexity of the program and policies related to transfer at our best practice institutions, there is a remarkable dearth of attention to faculty development, specifically related to supporting the transfer of students from community colleges. At one two-year institution, faculty who were motivated to improve their advising of transfer students indicated a lack of communication between central administration and faculty regarding issues relating to transfer. As a result, they noted that this lack of communication posed a large challenge to faculty who would like to help students, but were unclear about the universities' transfer policies.

Some of the faculty development efforts which were mentioned are noted below:

- Institutions sometimes integrate goals for addressing transfer issues within their ongoing agenda for professional development. Some institutions use their Teaching and Learning Centers to catalyze and facilitate ongoing discussions between and among faculty about the kinds of classroom-based issues that emerge when teaching transfer students, including those transferring from community colleges. One institution held a series of faculty-to-faculty dialogues on transfer, focusing on the kinds of supports both students and faculty may need to work together effectively.
- At other institutions, faculty are engaged in the planning and implementation of a variety of transfer activities, including transfer panel presentations, transfer days, or transfer fairs. These activities are sometimes jointly planned by student services staff and faculty. Leaders of these initiatives perceive the joint planning and implementation of these activities as ongoing professional development and relationship-building opportunities for faculty.
- In some specialized extended orientation and support programs for community college transfer students, four-year faculty are often asked to select students for participation and

then to advise and teach those that are selected. In one program in which faculty from both the two- and four-year colleges involved jointly participate in all aspects of program design and implementation, including reviewing applications, advising, and teaching, the benefits of close collaboration with peers from other institutional types was perceived to be an important professional development experience. Faculty from both two- and four-year institutions learned about each others' approach to teaching and their shared perspectives on student achievement. Through these interactions, two-year faculty learned about what assets were most helpful for student success in selective institutions; four-year faculty at the selective institution were able to understand the unique perspective of community college faculty and staff as they develop teaching and learning approaches tailored to meet the needs of diverse groups of students.

Barriers to Transfer

Because the primary focus of this report is on the various practices that support community college transfer students, references to ongoing barriers have been integrated throughout; however, these are some of the unique barriers which were described across the multiple institutions which we visited.

Closed Majors

In the process of conducting our site interviews, awareness of a barrier to community college transfer emerged, unique to publicly funded selective institutions where state policy mandates guaranteed transfer of qualified community college students. Enrollment management, aimed at regulating the numbers of community college students who matriculate into specific programs, has become a significant stressor in some public selective institutions. Because of the decentralized nature of the university structure and the strain on existing resources given undergraduate enrollments at maximum capacity, increasing numbers of programs at these institutions are being declared “closed.” Individual colleges within a university may declare specific programs “closed” based on a number of factors, which may include:

- high demand and limited enrollment capacity;
- admission requirements that are higher than the state standard; and,
- other factors that affect the college’s own enrollment management goals.

At some institutions, the closed status programs are formidable barriers to transfer, particularly in the sciences, business, and certain areas of the humanities, including theater and psychology. At some institutions, pressure to accept larger numbers of freshmen from applicant pools with students with higher caliber admissions credentials has resulted in increasing pressure

to limit the number of community college transfer students into those programs. Some administrators attributed the increasing numbers of more highly qualified freshmen applicants to the fact that, due to increased tuition rates among highly selective private institutions, more students are considering the state flagship as their first choice, rather than as a “safety” school.

Prestige Maximization

From his perspective on higher education as an economic market, Garvin described colleges and universities as engaging in “prestige maximization,” a tendency to perceive prestige as an organizational output and the quality of its faculty and incoming students as primary inputs (Garvin, 1980). In a market-driven economy, institutions of higher education often are in active competition with each other for rankings in the public media as defined by a wide range of factors, including academic achievement levels of entering freshmen. The selective and highly selective institutions which we visited were not exempted from this competitive environment; they were influenced by an interest in maximizing their prestige, among their peers internally and their various publics externally. Community colleges, given their own relationships with particular selective institutions, also exhibited some evidence of this same phenomenon.

In our visits, we observed examples of both four-year and two-year institutions engaged in practices aimed at elevating institutional prestige and, as a result, de-emphasizing a focus on increasing the number of community college students who transfer. Colleges and universities—through either conscious strategic efforts or subtle tendencies toward conformity—often mimic the behaviors of their peer institutions. In this case, external pressures from peer institutions have heightened some institutions’ sensitivity to issues of income but may be creating some difficulties regarding the maintenance of support for transfer. The competitive environment in

which these institutions exist has an impact on the development of new policies and practices related to transfer as well as on the ways in which existing policies and practices are perceived and modified. There was some awareness among the cohort of selective and highly selective institutions that some of their peers were changing financial aid structures to accommodate for more needs-based awards aimed at increasing low-income enrollments. However, some respondents from institutions engaged in such efforts noted that their peers were uninterested in following their lead.

One senior executive at a highly selective institution mentioned that some primary competitors “are now offering full rides to very low-income students – no loan, no work. That’s a huge incentive, and it works. But not too many institutions can afford to do that.” Currently, this executive’s institution provides a “preferential aid package” to students from families that earn less than \$25,000 per year. The preferential package reduces the “self help” portion (that is, loans and work study) from \$11,500 to \$5,000. But according to a financial aid administrator, there is no institutional discussion of whether to match the “full ride” policy of their institution’s closest competitors.

While some selectives may be investing more heavily in supporting low-income students, there seems to be limited interest in promoting transfer at others. One university’s director of undergraduate admissions indicated that one of his institution’s primary competitors “doesn’t accept any transfers, and hasn’t for two or three years.” The director noted that he meets occasionally with counterparts at their peer institutions, and

for the last meeting that we convened regarding transfer admissions, only four of the 8 institutions participated, because four of those institutions either had no interest or no sense that [transfer] was an important factor in their admissions process.

The director noted that resistance to transfer at some peer institutions makes it difficult for his university to market itself as a “transfer friendly” institution. If potential students do not differentiate among the institutions in a peer group, then they may view all of the institutions in that group as resistant to transfer. The risk, of course, is that increasing numbers of transfer students and the related changes in policy and practice may contradict other efforts at being competitive with selective peers who choose not to do so. Given pressures to compete by attracting high-achieving native or transfer students, some institutions may not be easily convinced to limit funds solely based on student need; in some cases, programs initially designed to increase the pipeline of low-income transfer students of color resulted in increased supports for middle-income students from over-represented groups because their higher academic credentials bolstered the overall academic profile of the institution.

Some other policies and practices related to prestige maximization:

- One urban community college with a longstanding transfer relationship with a nearby selective institution has constructed its own dorms in an effort to recruit larger numbers of students from out of state. In addition to this two-year institutions’ honors and transfer initiatives, the director of admissions viewed its residence halls as “selling points” to attract “students who have choices”:

This enables [our institution] to compete with more expensive private colleges and even with the universities in the state system. We have seen a continuing shift toward students in our transfer programs. Because of that and because we see a big market of those students out there, we are really trying to recruit and sell ourselves to students who have choices. We really started pushing not only our transfer programs, but our honors program. We’ve begun re-marketing ourselves and competing with the four-year private schools. I don’t want to compete with [a nearby community college]. I want to compete with [nearby private liberal arts colleges]. I want to compete with [nearby public universities].

The institution is attempting to reconstitute the peer group with which it competes and, in the process, may be at risk for diminishing its efforts to support low-income students.

Though the cohort of traditional-age students is increasing at this institution, it is unclear whether this increase includes larger numbers of low-income students. A faculty member described her perceptions of the transfer students with whom she has worked recently:

I don't know that these students are necessarily low-income. The four students that I mentioned are solidly middle class... We also get a lot of students whose parents work at [an elite university nearby], so if their grades are not good enough or if they feel that [the university] is too big and intimidating, they want to get their feet wet at a small place...

- Another constraining influence on transfer numbers, resulting in increasing numbers of “closed” majors, is the efforts to maximize the prestige of the institution, based on interests to raise the national rankings of the institution within college-level professional associations and as perceived by national media, such as *U.S. News and World Report*. A perception shared by those interviewed at one university and their two-year counterpart was that increasing numbers of programs were being declared “closed” as a way of increasing freshman enrollments consistent with higher admissions requirements set by the university and decreasing interest in providing access to these programs for transfer students. For example, the Psychology major in the college of Arts and Sciences was declared a “closed” program and, because of the high interest in this major, the College of Agriculture developed a parallel major designed to appeal to students interested in Psychology but unable to enter the mainstream program. Though the alternative program is touted as the functional equivalent of its counterpart in the liberal arts, several administrators expressed concern that the major would not help students seeking graduate opportunities in Psychology or related disciplines.

In some cases respondents indicated that the mandated ratio of transfer to native students in these programs had been reached; at other institutions without such regulating ratios in place, decisions to close transfer admissions were linked indirectly to efforts to build prestige of that college or program by accepting higher numbers of native students with high grade point averages. Although a variety of factors contribute to limited enrollment, at one institution a perception shared by those interviewed at both the university and their two-year counterparts was that more programs were being declared “closed” as a way to increase freshman enrollments consistent with higher admissions requirements set by the university and to decrease interest in providing access to these programs for transfer students.

- Efforts to build prestige informed practices even at institutions already perceived as highly selective. One college noted that its efforts to promote transfer of community college students to selective settings were of a generalized nature. The intent of the transfer initiatives at this institution were informed by an altruistic commitment to deepen the presence of low-income students across the range of four-year institutions, including but not limited to those considered “selective” or “highly selective.” The institution had made a strategic decision that its institutional resources would be dedicated to supporting this broader commitment rather than accepting large numbers of transfer students itself. Instead, individuals interviewed at this institution emphasized the importance of “building a freshman class,” using criteria for admission that made it competitive with the highest tier of selective institutions, a status to which the institution aspires.

Increased Admissions Requirements

Individuals at some institutions noted the increase in admissions requirements for entering freshmen and for admission into popular programs for transfer students. Staff and faculty at one community college noted that it was becoming increasingly difficult if not impossible for many of their transfer students to enter programs in Business, the Health Sciences, and many disciplinary majors in the College of Arts and Sciences. Even though the pre-professional courses required of lower division community college students to gain admission to specific programs are standardized across the state, staff know that many of the “closed” programs at the university have course requirements that exceed the state standard—a violation of state policy which effectively eliminates the possibility of transfer for many otherwise qualified community college students.

Inadequate Evaluation

One barrier that extends across multiple institutions which we visited was the lack of a consistent, coherent effort at evaluation--data gathering aimed at documenting ongoing initiatives focusing on recruiting, orienting, admitting, and providing ongoing support to community college transfer students. Such evaluation efforts would provide opportunities to aggregate data about prospective students, the feeder institution from which they transfer, their experience in the school system, as well as their needs relative to the transfer process. Evaluation data can inform the initial design of support systems as well as ongoing modifications introduced to respond to ongoing data analysis. It is important to investigate what steps both feeder and receiving institutions take to gather appropriate data about the students who are potential or active candidates for transfer. It is equally important to have multi-faceted

evaluation plans which address the efficacy of any interventions designed to recruit, orient, or support community college transfer students. Because some highly sophisticated transfer support programs lack formal assessment, it is impossible to draw relationships between the program and student outcomes. Similarly, it is important to bear in mind that the students who enter such programs may have been those with the ability and skills to succeed with or without intervention or support.

It is also important to include transfer students in any system-wide evaluations or assessments and to compare data disaggregated by transfer status with other students in comparable cohorts. Informal, action-based data collection is equally important. Some institutions that we visited based on their program development on formal or informal mechanisms for evaluation; however, a larger number of them had little or no data to substantiate claims about effectiveness about a particular program or system.

Some important practices in relation to evaluation include:

- Use of the college's institutional research unit to track performance of transfer students on annual basis. Such data tracking at one institution indicated that students who participated in a college-wide orientation program actually performed better than transfer students who did not and better than native freshmen students enrolled in the same program.
- One institution conducted survey work intended to compare the breadth, depth, and quality of services offered to students enrolled in its transfer support programs with those of its peer institutions in the area.
- Another four-year selective institution conducts annual surveys of all transfer students, specifically examining the experiences of transfer students during their first semester.

The survey also looked at first semester student academic outcomes. Findings from the report have informed restructuring of the transfer services deemed less effective and enhancement of those found to be useful and important to transfer student success. The Director for the Transfer Center noted that the survey's findings were significant, in terms of better understanding the needs of transfer students and are used in faculty and staff development activities designed to increase awareness of the unique needs of this audience.

Housing Limitations

Limited housing options was a frequently cited barrier to transfer at smaller highly-selective campuses which tend to experience low attrition. As one administrator explained, "We do have to think about the number of transfers relative to the first-year class...because we only have so many beds." New construction to accommodate transfers would require significant resources and pose difficulties for campuses that are not able to expand beyond their current borders.

For nontraditional-age students, especially those with families, the unavailability of apartment-style housing on campus or affordable housing off campus represents significant challenges. In fact, respondents from a campus that enrolls this population reported that lack of suitable housing dissuaded some student from enrolling.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are drawn from the case study of partnerships between highly selective four-year institutions (representing a range of institutional characteristics, such as public/private, liberal arts/research universities and geographic location) and community colleges with regard to the institutional practices, policies, and programs related to the transfer of low-income students from community colleges to the highly selective four-year settings.

These recommendations reflect 7 major areas in which institutions are already implementing large-scale change across the country. Given the unique cultures in both two- and four-year institutions seeking to become more amenable to the transfer of low-income students, establishing “where to start” among these recommendations might be a challenge. However, it is clear that in implementing such change efforts, all institutions, regardless of type must begin with *institutional commitment*, our first major theme.

Institutional Commitment to Ongoing Transformation

The findings of the case study reinforce realities at selective institutions which often obscure and contradict their roles as mechanisms for facilitating upward mobility. Instead, the barriers to increasing access to these students seem to emerge from institutional values and resulting policies, practices and attitudes that sometimes contradict the possibility of broadening access to students from low-income backgrounds. The future exemplars for access are likely to reinvent their practices and policies so that they are consistent with an institutional commitment that embraces equity and access as intrinsic to excellence.

Two- and four-year institutions interested in boosting transfer rates of low-income community college students to highly selective institutions will benefit from first conducting an institutional *self-assessment*, auditing the degree to which its policies, programs, and practices with an eye toward determining the steps necessary to increasing its amenability to transfer students. Having selected a course of action, institutions engaged in these activities will need to provide adequate resources to these partnerships, programs, and initiatives, including staffing, in order to ensure success and sustainability.

The following represent key aspects involved in developing and sustaining an institutional commitment to recruiting, enrolling, orienting and supporting low-income students from community colleges to highly selective four-year settings.

Leadership at Multiple Levels

Leaders at all levels of the institution can exert their respective authority to change policies and practices oriented to low-income student populations. **Presidents** can be the voice of transfer both within their own institutions and among all types of institutions locally, regionally, and nationally. Administrative staff, such as **senior administrators**, can provide institutional supports, such as endowed scholarships, as well as incentives to engage faculty in this work. Deans and Department chairs can work with faculty on curriculum and advising issues with regard to community college transfer. **Student Services personnel** including transfer counselors, admissions officers, and financial aid staff can provide clear information to prospective transfer students and act as reliable sources of information. **Faculty** can advocate for high achieving low-income community college students with whom they have worked especially through their relationships to other faculty.

Examples of exemplary practices include:

- A vice-president for academic affairs at a flagship university is a very strong and outspoken champion for the admission of community college transfer students. One of her priorities has been to set up endowed scholarships that are restricted for community college transfer students.
- A mid-level student services administrator at a large university organizes monthly transfer student orientations featuring transfer student panels. These panels highlight in-depth exploration of the experiences of transfer students who have succeeded within the institution and feature presentations done by the students themselves. The administrator notes that an important secondary audience for these presentations is the staff and faculty members in the college who attend these orientations so that, along with their student services staff, they too can “listen to students and improve what they do.”
- An associate director of admissions at a large public university actively advocates for successful transfer students to become part of her college’s curriculum committee after hearing student committee members (themselves native, traditionally-age students) complain at a meeting that transfer students do not have to prove their merit by completing general education requirements at the selective institution before being accepted.
- A senior university administrator spends at least one week each month as a member of statewide recruiting teams from the colleges at her institution, “pounding the pavement” on behalf of attracting high-achieving community college students to the institution.

Student-Centered Practices

Institutions that are interested in attracting low-income community college students can adopt any number of the following strategies to attract students to their campuses. To **recruit** high achieving low-income community college students, **four-year institutions can develop relationships with a number of feeder schools**, including those outside of the service area, to ensure representativeness in terms of race and ethnicity and **employ multiple approaches for identifying promising transfer students in the community colleges**, including faculty recommendations and culturally-sensitive exams, in order to reach as many students as possible. **Pre-Transfer residential programs** which include a residential component help to demystify the elite institutions and familiarize transfer students with campus life, academic expectations, and supports available to them. At the community college level, **advising** of low-income students who are potential transfer candidates is most effective when shared by faculty and student services personnel.

Once students have matriculated to the four-year settings, highly selective colleges and universities should consider adopting **inclusive strategies for pedagogy and ongoing student support**.

Examples of exemplary practices include:

- Faculty at one community college send promising students to the honors program director who works with them on academic self-esteem and introduces the transfer option.

Honors courses are set up as learning communities and taught by pairs of faculty from across the college. Students move through the program in a cohort. Honors colloquium instructors focus on encouraging self-directed scholarship with a mentor and intensive reading and writing in ways that prepare students for advanced work in a four-year liberal

arts program. Writing and research assignments geared to introduce students to graduate-level work.

- A counseling center at a community college provides all personal, academic, career, and transfer counseling for students, with specific services geared to transfer to its partner university. Services include weekly transfer workshops for students, which focus on application and financial aid processes; presentations in English classes each semester, which reach nearly every student in the college; and transfer charts that are aligned with many programs in two colleges at the university.
- A regional consortium consists of four higher education institutions and 13 local school districts that provides academic and motivational support and assistance with financial aid and college admissions processes to low-income students who are identified at the end of eighth grade by middle school teachers and guidance counselors.
- A teaching and learning center developed using the expertise of faculty who taught in a program to support low-income community college students at a small liberal arts college, is designed to support all students, including transfer students.

Financial Aid

Four-year colleges and universities can **assess current financial aid policies** to determine whether any will need to be modified so that they do not disadvantage low-income community college transfer students. They may want to consider **pursuing external sources of funding** that can be dedicated to scholarship and other aid for low-income students or developing **strategies for reallocating existing budgets** to better support the financial aid needs of low-income students.

Examples of exemplary practices include:

- Presidents in some institutions aggressively sought trustee support to identify line items within their existing institutional endowments to support their own transfer support programs. Trustees at some institutions donated large sums of money, aimed specifically at programs supporting the transfer of students from low-income backgrounds.
- One institution changed the way in which it configured its student meal plan so that the resulting cost-savings would be used to support low-income student scholarships.
- Many institutions, using newly generated funds or monies gained through budgetary reallocation, created a pool of institutional scholarships, available specifically to low-income students from community college backgrounds.
- One four-year institution changed its long-held policy of raising the debt-level for incoming transfer students to match those of native students.
- Another institution is considering changing the way it defines students' financial autonomy from their parents so that more students from non-traditional backgrounds will qualify for institutional aid.
- A third institution has an open-door policy which is broadly appreciated across the college campus; the policy encourages students with aid plans to request additional aid if fiscal exigencies threaten their ongoing attendance and academic achievement.

Professional Development

Both two- and four-year institutions should make general information about institutional policies related to transfer of students from community colleges available to faculty and staff, including (1) **information summarizing institutional data on transfer students**, including

performance data at the four-year site, e.g., retention, graduation rates, and cross-institutional comparisons on state and national levels, (2) **specific information on the nature of community college education, and policies and practices** related to transfer of community college students to highly selective institutions, and (3) information **about best practices in supporting low-income community college transfer students**, including advising, and opportunities for tailoring this knowledge to individual institutions and/or programs.

To provide the most effective academic experience to low-income community college transfer students, faculty will need opportunities to explore **best practices in advising and pedagogy** which prepare students for coursework at the four-year institution.

Examples of exemplary practices include:

- A transfer collaborative provides opportunities for university faculty who teach gatekeeper courses to discuss curriculum and professional development for staff to improve support for transfer students.
- Transfer advisors from two university departments hold a regularly scheduled drive-in conference for community college and university student services personnel addressing student development issues related to transfer. The conference provides opportunities for faculty and staff from transfer partnerships to develop a common professional development agenda related to transfer and a public venue for sharing locally generated strategies for responding to recruiting, orientation, and student support issues unique to the area.
- A summer program at a large public university facilitated the transition of admitted transfer students who are low-income, first-generation or underrepresented minorities and includes an intensive, six-week academic

program, part residential and part commuter, with courses in academic writing and research, and courses related to specific academic majors; a research course that introduces transfer students to faculty, graduate students, and the research process. Students completing the program earn 12 units toward their degree.

Partnerships

Strong partnerships between community colleges and highly selective colleges and universities are central to facilitate low-income community college student transfer. **Strong, collegial, personal relationships** among individuals involved in transfer, including faculty, administrators, and staff that are characterized by trust and respect create the “living structure” of the partnership. **Formal transfer agreements**, such as articulation, collaborative, guaranteed and limited agreements, provide a solid basis for partnerships. A **variety of options for partnership participation**, including joint meetings and activities, conferences for professional associations, and state-wide committees, increase opportunities for information sharing, planning, and problem solving.

Examples of exemplary practices include:

- Two small liberal arts colleges enter into collaborative agreements with community colleges that are based on personal relationships characterized by respect and trust. Agreements, continually updated through dialogue rather than a codified contract, are efficient to manage. These create a smooth process for students and staff involved in transfer as well as a pipeline for high-achieving students of varied backgrounds.
- Transfer to a large public university is driven by an articulation agreement which guarantees that community college transfer students who have completed the Associate

of Arts degree may enter the upper division of one of the state universities. On-line technologies facilitate critical interactions between students and the institution, including all functions related to admission, registration, grading, financial aid, and universal tracking of student progress toward degree attainment.

- A college at a large public university works closely with the transfer center at a community college partner to recruit and orient community college transfer students. The university college holds regularly scheduled office hours to meet with prospective students and interested faculty and staff at the nearby community college. Transfer advisors from the college meet with community college faculty and their students to orient them to the curriculum and recent programmatic changes. College transfer advisors, who typically have training in student development, present at statewide meetings, participate in multi-institutional recruitment fairs, and meet with their counterparts at local community colleges on a regular basis.
- An intensive five-week summer residential program staffed and administered collaboratively by four-year liberal arts faculty and community college faculty is geared to for first-generation low-income community college students and designed to develop participants' personal agency and to encourage participants to consider a number of different four-year options.
- Several academic departments at a community college have advisory boards that include faculty members from four-year institutions. Participants discuss curricular changes at the community college and at the four-year institutions represented on the board.

Evaluation

Few institutions in the case study assessed specific programs and practices to recruit, enroll, and support low-income community college transfer students; however, researchers recommend that institutions planning to increase low-income community college student enrollments should also employ ongoing mechanisms to determine the effectiveness of their efforts and to make improvements. Spurred by internal efforts at establishing standards for institutional effectiveness and external mandates for accountability, many colleges and universities are committed to building and deepening a “culture of inquiry,” based in the “capacity for insightful questioning of evidence and informed interpretation of results” (Dowd, 2005). Evaluation should **document ongoing initiatives** focusing on recruiting, admitting, orienting, and providing ongoing support to community college transfer students at both two- and four-year institutions. Evaluation efforts can also focus on data collection about **prospective students**, the **feeder institution** from which they transfer, as well as student **needs** relative to the transfer process.

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